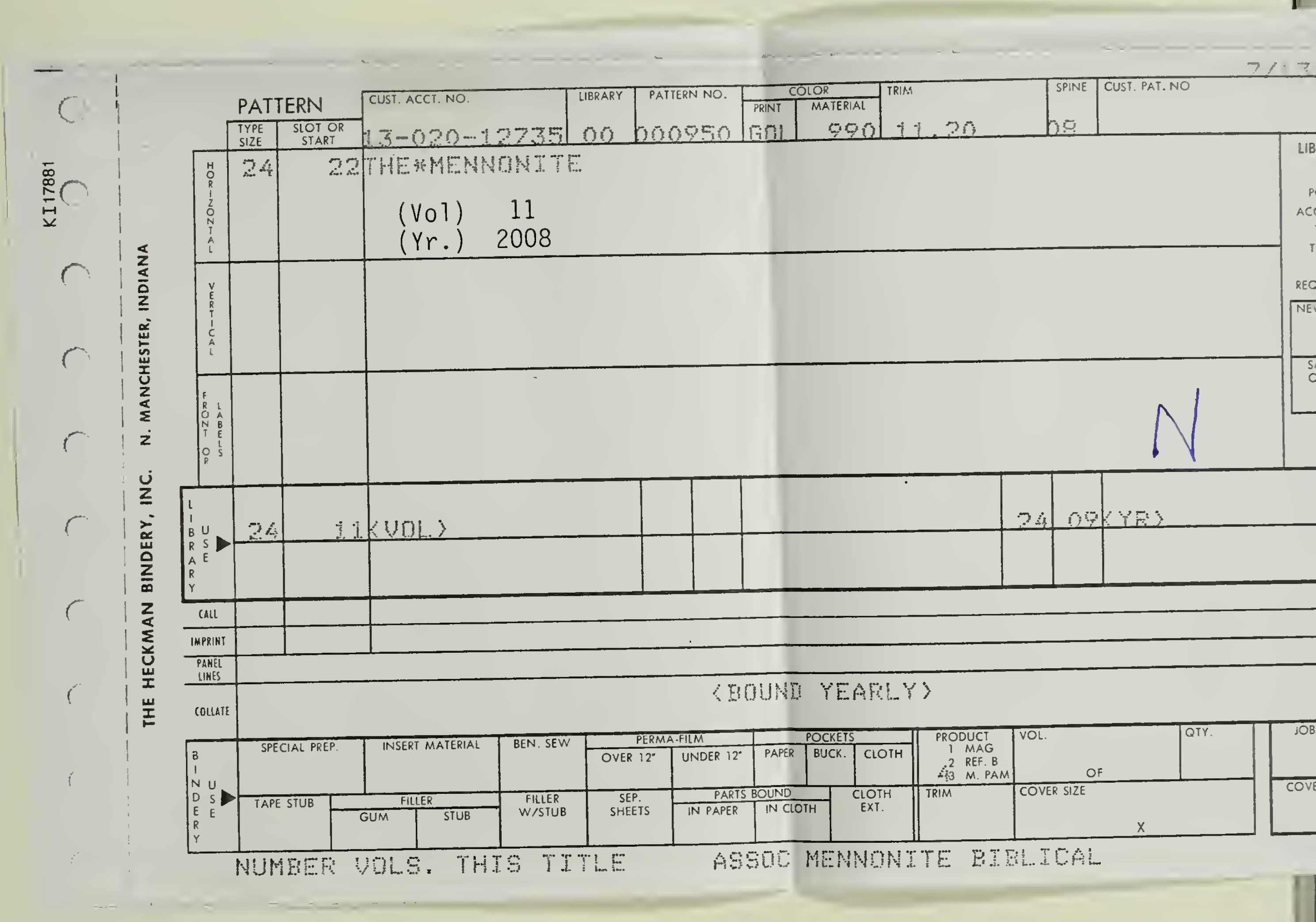
ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
3 9304 01041722 9

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

https://archive.org/details/mennonite200811unse



KI17881

THE HECKMAN BINDERY, INC. N. MANCHESTER, INDIANA

7/13

PATTERN TYPE SIZE	SLOT OR START	CUST. ACCT. NO.	LIBRARY	PATTERN NO.	COLOR PRINT	COLOR MATERIAL	TRIM	SPINE	CUST. PAT. NO
		13-020-12735	00	000950	G01	990	11.20	08	

	TYPE SIZE	SLOT OR START	
HORIZONTAL	24	22	THE*MENNONITE (Vol) 11 (Yr.) 2008
VERTICAL			
FRONT OR LABELS			N
LIBRARY USE	24	11	<VOL> 24 09<YR>
CALL			
IMPRINT			
PANEL LINES			
COLLATE			<BOUND YEARLY>

BINDERY USE

SPECIAL PREP. | INSERT MATERIAL | BEN. SEW | PERMA-FILM: OVER 12" | UNDER 12" | POCKETS: PAPER | BUCK. | CLOTH | PRODUCT 1 MAG 2 REF. B 3 M. PAM | VOL. OF | QTY. | JOB

TAPE STUB | FILLER: GUM | STUB | FILLER W/STUB | SEP. SHEETS | PARTS BOUND: IN PAPER | IN CLOTH | CLOTH EXT. | TRIM | COVER SIZE X | COVE

NUMBER VOLS. THIS TITLE ASSOC MENNONITE BIBLICAL

LIB

P

ACC

T

REC

NE

S

C

TheMennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

January 8, 2008

Mennonite *but not* Anabaptist

Page 8

12 Free to be different

15 The four renderings

18 Human sacrifice

32 In with the old

Warning: church ahead

Ron W. Adams is pastor at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

While traveling along State Road 95 in Texas last summer, I saw something that made me wonder. It was one of those yellow signs that warn drivers about curves or slippery pavement. This one, though, simply read, Church.

Given the size of the church, I suppose the sign was intended to warn oncoming traffic about all those cars leaving after services. Still, as I drove by I couldn't help speculating about other reasons why a congregation would merit such a warning to passersby.

Maybe it was an especially rowdy congregation, with attendees routinely spilling out onto the road in the sheer joy of their salvation.

Or maybe it was a congregation given to liturgical line dancing, sometimes snaking their merry way out the door and across the highway and then back again in perfect gospel rhythm.

Or maybe it was in the middle of an aggressive stewardship campaign, and had turned SR 95 into a Sundays-only toll road. I could picture the ushers wearing cowboy hats and wielding offering plates like six-shooters.

Then my mind took a darker turn. I thought of the public face of evangelical Christianity in this country. I thought of radio preachers using the language of fear to garner that next donation, politicians using the language of faith to justify war-making and the xenophobic and hateful rhetoric too often coming from people claiming to be born again. And it occurred to me that having warning signs in front of churches may be a public service. Let the immigrant and the unchurched, the Muslim and the Jew, the stranger and the other of whatever kind beware. Horrible things of thee are spoken on these premises. Better go wide around and lock your doors. There's a church coming up on the right, and you want to keep clear of it.

OK, I know that's over the top and unfair. And it certainly does not describe my congregation or yours. We are better than that. Christians are better than that. Aren't we? I hope so. I drove on.

Out in the open again, I wondered some more. Suppose that yellow sign was there to warn the world that something peculiar is going on behind church doors? That inside that building is a people with strange convictions and even stranger behavior? That everything you thought was true as you traveled along the road was being called into question by the members of that congregation?

What if the sign were there to warn passersby that entering the doors of that building may be akin to a death? A death to every allegiance but what we owe Christ. A death to sin in all its forms, from vengeance to materialism to false hope to false pride. A death to our belief in our own importance, our own immortality, our own selves. The death Paul called putting away the things of this world.

And after all those deaths comes resurrection. Having died in Christ, we are made alive with Christ. Having shed the garments of conformity and delusion, the garments of idolatry, we put on Christ and are never the same again.

Imagine if people knew that they entered our churches at the risk of death. The death of much they believe and much they hold dear. Imagine if people knew they'd be changed forever by what and who they encounter in our buildings and among our people. Imagine if they knew they'd go in like the world but come out like Jesus. And, like Jesus, maybe suffer and die for the salvation of the same world they left behind just a moment before.

Surely such a dangerous and life-altering place is worthy of a big old yellow sign warning: Church.

TheMennonite

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Vol. 11, No. 1, January 8, 2008

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

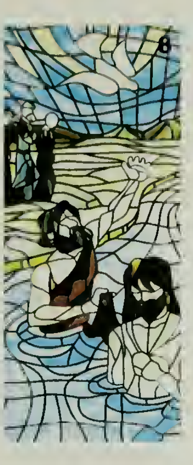
The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN
JAN 9 '08



8 Mennonite but not Anabaptist
A call to end 'cannibalism' in Mennonite churches—*Chad S. Mason*

11 Musings on baptism
Baptism and confirmation address a critical issue.—*John A. Lapp*

12 Free to be different
Life-changing obedience looks different in different places and situations.—*Karl Landis*

15 The four renderings
Evil for good, evil for evil, good for good, good for evil—*Ted Lewis*

19 Mennonite groups find unity in Congo

20 Top 10 news stories during 2007

22 Documenting Colombia's suffering, hope

23 Asian churches pursue merger with MWC

24 Support increases for Iraqi peacemakers

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Warning: church ahead—*Ron W. Adams*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking out
Human sacrifice—*Ernest D. Martin*

27 For the record

30 Real families
'I'm getting married in the morning'—*Sara Wenger Shenk*

32 Editorial
In with the old—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: ©Photographer: Mykola Velychko | Dreamstime.com

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Too hard on lectionary

Palmer Becker draws on a lifetime of experience and makes good points in his Nov. 20, 2007, article ("We Can Preach Differently"). However, Becker is too hard on the lectionary, which our congregation has used throughout the year for several years. Becker says, "It does not allow sufficient freedom to address such important themes as discipleship, peace and reconciliation."

If a preacher wishes to develop a sermon on any of these topics, she or he would surely look for passages of Scripture as a basis for the sermon. The lectionary takes users through much of the Bible systematically, so that a passage appropriate to such a topic is likely to be scheduled, if not right away. Moreover, the lectionary offers a choice of at least four passages per Sunday, and they are not always topically related to each other. Thus the pastor who has a certain topic in mind and approaches the assigned readings creatively may find it easy to make the points she or he has in mind—even if the context is not exactly what would have been chosen without the lectionary.

The lectionary is a strong entry into Scripture. It is not a straitjacket.—*Thomas Lehman, Chapel Hill, N.C.*

Our work or God's work?

Palmer Becker writes, "Mennonites tend to begin with the servant-nurturing side of God that we see in Jesus Christ." Is it the work of God or our imitation of the work of God?

When I was born again, God revealed that any expression that was righteous in his sight had to find its origin in him, not in me. Every good work is to be a symptom, not a cause, of my relationship to God. I have no problem with ministers preaching from the epistles of Paul. Paul measured up quite well in his outward expressions toward other people. However, he detested having to boast about himself to make his point. Jesus said, "Without me, you can do nothing" (nothing that is righteous). Do all Mennonites really believe they are God's workmanship?

Our only escape from our self-centeredness and self-righteousness is Jesus Christ. Nothing less. Nothing more.—*Levi W. Mumma, Manheim, Pa.*

IN THIS ISSUE

As occasionally happens when we put together an issue of *The Mennonite*, a theme emerges that we did not intend. This time: a focus on the more theologically conservative elements within our Mennonite traditions. Karl Landis (page 12) asks why the marks of faithfulness—such as prayer coverings and plain suits—common in some parts of Mennonite Church USA have been jettisoned. On this page a letter from Theron Schlabach suggests that we give greater value to the church leaders in our more recent past; another letter from Levi Miller reminds us of our traditional belief in "two kingdoms." The editorial suggests that responses to data from the 2006 Church Member Profile may leave us paying too much attention to our particular part of the Anabaptist family and not enough to the more theologically conservative Mennonites and Amish who are also our spiritual sisters and brothers.—*Editor*

Learn from recent leaders also

Thank you for Nancy Heisey's article, "Why Church History Matters" (Dec. 4, 2007). Her points were keen and valuable, and I certainly bring no objections. Of course, she could not say everything. Almost all her illustrations came from history remote enough that few of us are wrestling with that history in an intensely personal way.

What I have seen in our church life, as I write history of Mennonites in America, is our great difficulty accepting our history of the last three or four generations. So often the tendencies are to say, "Those leaders claimed to keep the church pure and faithful—but in fact, they were ruthless with power." Or, "Those folks were so limited—we have all these broad, urban and global experiences and training." And, in sum, "We're smart, progressive and enlightened—they were pious, all right, but naïve at best, benighted at worst."

Our more immediate spiritual ancestors were indeed human, and not all were paragons of wisdom. Where they made choices that we believe betrayed the gospel, we don't want to follow. But they also passed on a deep commitment to following Jesus. They nurtured our faith. They were fellow members of the church, across time as well as across geography and cultural divides. They were part of what we now celebrate as the church's diversity. And Nancy Heisey's central point applies to them as well as to more ancient examples: Many of the issues that earlier Christians faced resemble choices we wrestle with now.

Can we not learn also from our more immediate spiritual ancestors? Can we not learn also by studying them and their faith (or sometimes their unfaith), even if we tend to react against them? Can we learn, even if our doing so calls for a little more humility?—*Theron F. Schlabach, Goshen, Ind.*

Republicanism is Mennonite tradition

At Laurelville Retreat Center meetings about four decades ago, a typical feature was an after-dinner story time. One of Paul M. Lederach's favorite stories was about the Quaker farmer who had a cow that kicked at milking time. In the story, the cow continued to kick the bucket, until finally the humble Quaker gave her a warning.

"OK, Bessie," the gentle Quaker said, "I cannot think of a good reason for you to continue kicking me, and you know that I will not beat you. But I want you to know that if you kick me one more time, I will sell you to my Presbyterian neighbor, and he will beat the stuffing out of you."

The roomful of people laughed vigorously, and I always suspected that the proverbial Quaker was probably a Mennonite.

I thought of that story again when I read the 2006 findings of Conrad Kanagy's church membership profile in *Road Signs for the Journey* and how consistently our membership continues to honor a two-kingdom biblical ethic. According to Kanagy, 65 percent of Mennonite Church USA members are conscientious objectors to war, with only 20 percent open to entering the military. This is still a strong consensus position compared with other denominations. This percentage is down from 81 percent in 1972, but given all the other assimilation impulses during the past four decades, it is still different from other religious and Christian groups.

On the other hand, over half of Mennonite Church USA members are Republicans, and about two-thirds voted for Bush in the last elections. This is in continuity with earlier generations of Mennonites who showed, according to John Ruth in the Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference history, "an almost absolute Republican preference."—*Levi Miller, Scottdale, Pa.*

Pastors' questions are shameful

In "A Pastor Questions the Bible He Loves," Timothy J. Schultz displays an attitude of profound arrogance and condescension in what amounts to a dissertation of disbelief of the Bible. (Speaking Out, Nov. 20). While paying lip service to the Bible being "reliable," he fails to convince me that he really considers it to be "his guide for life" or why anybody should want to embrace it as their guide for life. My impression is that he is trying to encourage the questioning of Scripture as a way to be strengthened in one's faith. Yet he would deal with difficult passages by simply dismissing them as not having to be true. He approaches the Bible with a hermeneutic of presumption, not faith. He implies that the only truth that can be found in the Bible is what conforms to his superior knowledge of how things can be, and the credible teachings of the Bible are only those that agree with what he has predetermined to be worthy of belief. Where the Bible does not match what he believes, he assumes that the Bible may be in error; he does not entertain the possibility that he may be the one in error. Yet he claims that if what the Bible teaches us to be true in history is false, his faith is still intact because of "truth behind the stories."

Truth based on a lie is no truth at all. If the Bible is the revelation of God, why would God reveal to us what is not accurate?

It is alarming enough that these ideas come from a credentialed pastor in Mennonite Church USA, let alone a pastor of youth. But why did *The Mennonite* see fit to devote an entire page to undermining the credibility of the Bible rather than to affirm and instruct people in the reliability and authority of God's Word?—*Marc Hershberger, Lansdale, Pa.*

Give a gift to Jesus

Regarding Everett Thomas' Dec. 4 editorial on suggestions for the Advent season ("We Can Do Better With Advent"): Instead of giving gifts to each other, as an extended family give a gift to Jesus. That is what the wise men did. They didn't give gifts to each other as we Westerners are doing. This year we plan to divide our gift to Jesus to a missionary couple who is in need of support and to a poor mother in one of our congregations. We've been spiritually blessed by doing this. —*Lloyd Weaver, Newport News, Va.*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

If someone who was baptized as an infant wants to join my congregation (56 votes):

○ We leave it up to them (59%)

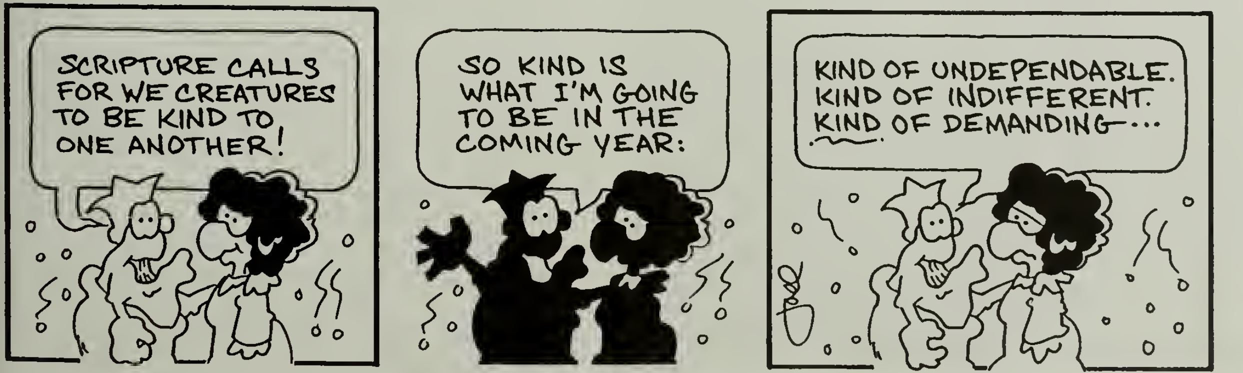
○ We require rebaptism (25%)

○ Not sure (11%)

○ We do not rebaptize them (5%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


SCRIPTURE CALLS FOR WE CREATURES TO BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER!
SO KIND IS WHAT I'M GOING TO BE IN THE COMING YEAR:
KIND OF UNDEPENDABLE. KIND OF INDIFFERENT. KIND OF DEMANDING—...

IN BRIEF

Archbishop cuts up clerical collar

The African-born Anglican archbishop of York startled a nationwide BBC audience Dec. 9, 2007, when he sliced up his clerical collar during a live interview and vowed not to wear it until Robert Mugabe quits as president of Zimbabwe. Archbishop John Sentamu, the No. 2 prelate in the Church of England's hierarchy, said Mugabe has "taken people's identity and literally—if you don't mind—cut it to pieces. " The archbishop has been a steadfast critic of Mugabe, whom he described as "the worst kind of dictator." His regime, Sentamu said, has turned Zimbabwe, a once-wealthy nation, from a "bread basket into a basket case." *—National Catholic Reporter*

North American Muslims issue fatwa against terrorism

North American Muslim clerics have issued a fatwa against Islamic terrorism, hoping to build on the recent Mideast peace talks and a Vatican invitation to meet with Muslim leaders. "Targeting civilians' life and property through suicide bombings or any other method of attack is prohibited in Islam ... and those who commit these barbaric acts are criminals, not 'martyrs,'" the fatwa reads.*—The Christian Century*

James Waltner, church leader, dies at 76

GOSHEN, Ind.—James H. Waltner, 76, of Goshen, a longtime Mennonite pastor, died Dec. 18, 2007. He was born in rural Marion, S.D., Sept. 7, 1931, to Henry Jac. and Ida (Kaufman) Waltner. He graduated from Freeman Academy and Junior College at Freeman, S.D. Later he attended Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., where he met Lenore Pankratz of Mountain Lake, Minn. They were married June 1, 1956.

James Waltner

James graduated from Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago in 1958. He was ordained into ministry at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D., and served Tabor Mennonite Church, rural Newton, Kan., 1958-1967. From 1967 to 1972, he served First Mennonite Church, Upland, Calif., and completed a D.Min. degree at Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, Calif. James and his family moved to Normal, Ill., where he served First Mennonite Church, and after a congregational merger, the Mennonite Church of Normal, 1972-1986. He spent the last 10 years of his pastoral ministry at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, retiring in 1996.

James authored *This We Believe*, a catechism study book for young people, in 1967, and *Psalms*, a volume in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series, published in 2006.

He was active in church work for more than five decades, including serving as president of the Pacific District and Central District of the General Conference Mennonite Church, the GCMC General Board, chair of the Mennonite Biblical Seminary Board and moderator of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference. At his death, James was overseer for five congregations of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference.

His wife of 51 years, Lenore, of Goshen, survives, as well as daughter Rachel and husband Duane Goossen of Topeka, Kan.; son Tim and wife Sandy Waltner of Mackinaw, Ill.; daughter JoAn and husband Rob Thieszen of Newton, Kan.; and grandchildren Ben and Elsa Goossen and Maura Thieszen. Other survivors include a brother, Harris and Christine Waltner of North Newton, Kan., sister, Hilda and Kenneth Kaufman of Sioux Falls, S.D., sister-in-law Shirley Waltner of Freeman, S.D., and nieces and nephews. His parents and two brothers, Harold and Calvin, preceded him in death.*—Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference*

Jim Bishop

Dancing on African time at EMU

Students who spent fall semester on a cross-cultural seminar in South Africa do a skit on "adjusting to African time." They led the final chapel service of fall semester Dec. 12, 2007, at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. The group, led by faculty members Harlan de Brun and Audra Baker, divided their time among Soweto, Lesotho and Cape Town in language study and learning the history and experiencing the culture of the regions.*—EMU*

Erick Sawatzky, seminary professor, dies

ELKHART, Ind.—Erick Sawatzky, 63, associate professor emeritus of pastoral ministry at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, died Dec. 6, 2007, in Winnipeg. Sawatzky joined the AMBS faculty in 1986, directing the field education program and teaching in the area of pastoral ministry. During this time, he also was a member of the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church for 12 years and chaired it for several years. He also was a member of the General Conference Committee on the Ministry from 1988 to 1997.

Erick Sawatzky

In 2004, Sawatzky realized a dream of editing essays on ministry written by AMBS faculty, *The Heart of the Matter: Pastoral Ministry in Anabaptist Perspective* (Cascadia and Herald Press).

Sawatzky taught at AMBS for 16 years. Diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease and Multiple System Atrophy, he retired early in 2004. He and Beverley, his wife, moved to Winnipeg in 2006.

Sawatzky was born in Rosetown, Sask., on Nov. 15, 1944, and grew up in the Herschel Mennonite Church. He pursued a master's degree at AMBS, then pastored in Hillsboro, Kan., and Regina, Sask. Later he was involved in prison ministry.

Sawatzky is survived by Beverly (Boldt), his wife of 39 years; son Tyler and his wife, Angela Plank; and daughter Tamara Sawatzky, her hus-

EMM photo

me to the water in Belize
agers in northern Belize line up to receive fresh water from ef workers. Eastern Mennonite Missions contributed funds elp workers and local church partners deal with the effects urricane Dean, which hit there in late August 2007.—*EMM*

band, Reynold Friesen, and their son, Caleb. Sawatzky was the youngest child of Peter P. and Katharina Sawatzky (both deceased). Brothers and sisters are Peter G. (Margaret), Jacob (Lena), Elsie Neufeldt (Bruno), Henry (Evelyn), William (Ruby), Werner (Louise), Edna Peters (John), sister-in-law Judy Bergen (Philip), along with many nieces and nephews across Canada and the United States and cousins in Germany.—*AMBS*

World Fellowship Sunday is Jan. 27

STRASBOURG, France—Anabaptists in all parts of the world are invited to join their faith family in celebrating World Fellowship Sunday on Jan. 27.

This year two Africans, Hellen Bradburn and Matiku T. Nyitambe from Tanzania, have created worship material to mark this Sunday. They have chosen the theme "Worship and Serve the Lord Your God." The materials include suggestions for worship, prayer requests from around the world, sermon prompts and a story. These resources provide a way for churches to enter more fully into fellowship, intercession and thanksgiving with the global faith family.

Mennonite World Conference asks Anabaptist-related churches to remember our common roots and celebrate our worldwide koinonia on a Sunday close to Jan. 21. On that date in 1525, the first Anabaptist baptism took place in Zurich, Switzerland. World Fellowship Sunday materials are online at www.mwc-cmm.org in English, French, Spanish, German and Portuguese.—*MWC*

Kidron Mennonite Church receives grant

ATLANTA—Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church has received a grant of $5,000 from the Fund for Theological Exploration (FTE) for Ministry Exploration, a partnership in mentoring between leaders of local congregations and a Mennonite high school to introduce students to the profession of ordained ministry.

FTE asks congregations across the country to consider the question, Who will lead the church tomorrow? And to help find the answer, FTE is awarding grants totaling $73,000 to eight congregations with innovative ideas for cultivating the call to ministry among youth.

FTE will award $200,000 in grants through 2009 as part of its Calling Congregations initiative, which is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. This is a national, ecumenical effort to encourage and equip churches to play a leading role in the vocational discernment of young men and women and to increase the number of gifted young people considering ordained ministry as a profession.—*FTE*

New record for Nazareth Village

NAZARETH, Israel—Last October and November, record numbers of visitors experienced the light of Jesus at Nazareth Village. According to Shirley Roth, executive director of Nazareth Village through Mennonite Mission Network and Virginia Mennonite Missions, more than 6,000 people toured the village in October, and nearly 5,400 came in November. Both figures eclipsed the village's previous record for attendance in a month, set in March 2007.

Interest in the recreation of first-century life often increases during the region's November olive festival. Many November visitors came to watch the village's first-century olive press—a donkey turning a heavy stone to c 63,rush the olives visitors place on a pestle. Roth says Nazareth residents still use olives for food, economic exports, soap, perfume and curative balms. First-century residents also would have used the oil for religious ceremonies and their lamps and burned the pits for light and heat. The olive oil used for the tourending room of light ties together the November olive festival with the December celebration of Jesus' birth.—*Mennonite Mission Network and Virginia Mennonite Missions*

—compiled by Gordon Houser

IN BRIEF

MCC names Rush resource generation network director

Mennonite Central Committee has appointed Philip H. Rush resource generation network director to lead the organization's fund-raising work in the United States and Canada. Rush is an associate professor of business and information systems at Goshen (Ind.) College and a former regional director for development at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. Rush served with MCC from 1991 to 1993 as an English teacher in China and from 1995 to 1997 as assistant director of the China Educational Exchange program. *—MCC*

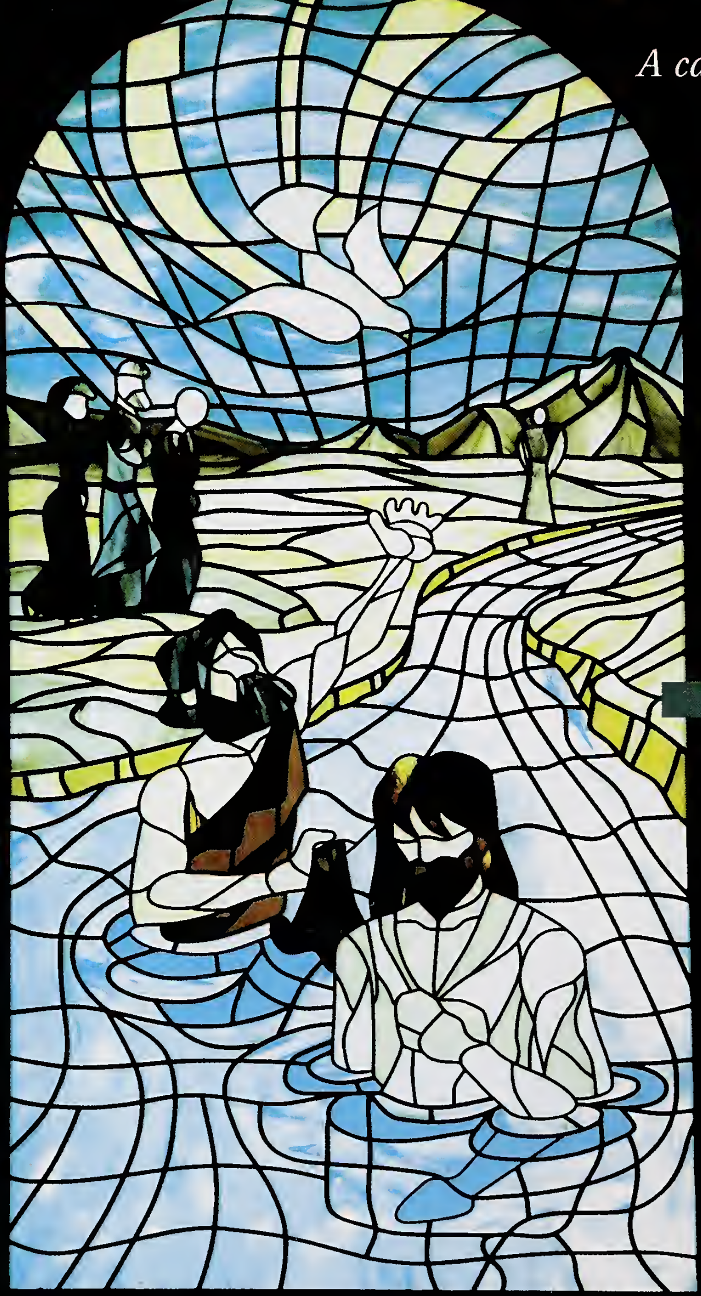
Rutschman given culture award

On Dec. 2, 2007, in Jokkmokk, Sweden, Tom Rutschman of Mennonite Mission Network received the Jokkmokk kommun district's Culture Award for 2007. This award, instituted in 1975, recognizes individuals who contribute significantly to the cultural life of the region. The award committee cited Rutschman's work with youth and justice/global solidarity issues as primary reasons for the honor. *—Mennonite Mission Network*

Mennonite *but not* Anabaptist

A call to end 'cannibalism' in Mennonite churches

by Chad S. Mason



© Photographer: Geotrac | Dreamstime.com

This [article] excludes all infant baptism, the highest and chief abomination of the pope.—Article I, Schleitheim Confession (1527)

Baptism is the basic sacrament of initiation, in which a new relationship is established between the candidate and the Church. The candidate formally embarks on the way to discipleship, and the community commits itself to guide the candidate in the following of Christ.—Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J. (1986)

The members of a rural Mennonite congregation stared at me with a peaceful but quizzical silence. They were gracious and hospitable people and were giving me the benefit of the doubt. Drawing from an obscure line by Stanley Hauerwas, I had suggested that "infant baptism can only be practiced with integrity by communities like the Mennonites." Seeing their reaction, I assured them that in my own Mennonite congregation we do not practice infant baptism, since we believe it to be an inferior practice to convert baptism, but we do honor infant baptisms performed elsewhere. They remained gracious but still apparently unsettled, and I feared I might be lousing up my appearance as a guest preacher.

Their meetinghouse rests quietly on the broad alluvial valley of a winding, sluggish river in southeastern Iowa, where the soil is rich and dark. On a calm summer day you can almost hear the corn growing, and your listening is as likely to be interrupted by the clomping of a horse-drawn carriage as by the sound of automobiles.

It may be a long way from Schleitheim in time, distance and circumstance, but the rhetoric of the Radical Reformation still carries much emotional potency here.

This valley has been the home of Amish and Mennonite farmers for more than 130 years. It may be a long way from Schleitheim in time, distance and circumstance, but the rhetoric of the Radical Reformation still carries much emotional potency here.

However, it is important to situate that rhetoric in its historical context, lest we misunderstand and misuse it today. "Anabaptism" is rebaptism, not simply believer's baptism. (The prefix ana- means "again.") The first generation of radical reformers had to be called Anabaptists because everyone in European society was already baptized; there were no unbaptized proselytes available to the first radical reformers. Subsequent generations of radical reformers continued to be called Anabaptists, not because they refused to baptize their own children but because they remained willing to rebaptize Catholic and Protestant converts.

State power: In rebaptizing their converts, radical reformers publicly rejected the indiscriminate practice of infant baptism in medieval Europe and its entanglement with the machinations of state power. Today Christians of all kinds have lauded the theological and political vision of the Anabaptists. In a time when baptism inducted a new German citizen but seemed to have lost its connection with the way of Jesus, one could fairly ask whether such a baptism was fully Christian. In the context of 16th-century Europe, rebaptism served as a clarion call for Christians to reconnect baptism with discipleship and to disconnect baptism from state control. Anabaptism constituted an alternative society amid warring church-state complexes and called people out from those complexes of power to embrace the weakness of Christ. Today the radical reformers are widely admired for issuing that call under the constant threat of martyrdom.

But what should we as Mennonites think about the current time, when Catholics—especially in Europe and the United States—are no less disenfranchised than we are from the corridors of worldly power? Should infant baptism continue to be a church-dividing issue now that our Catholic neighbors practice baptism, of infants and adults, discriminately as part of an intentional process of disciple-making? What shall we do when infant baptism comes unglued from its historical Christendom apparatus and no longer serves as a rite of entry to civil society? Under such conditions, can Mennonites legitimately exclude all infant baptism? Such exclusion surely lacks the theological and political relevance it had for the brethren at Schleitheim.

Simply put, Catholic baptism is no longer coincident with worldly citizenship. Catholics themselves are keenly aware of this. They conduct their baptisms not in private but during Sunday Mass, as public initiations to God's alternative society. They know that if their children are going to stay Catholic, they will need the purposeful care of the Catholic community. They'll need strong parishes and committed Catholic parents and mentors; they may even need Catholic schools. Catholics know they are resident aliens, a subculture distinct from its surrounding host. In postmodern America, Catholics know they must intentionally cultivate Catholic beliefs and practices in order to prevent their extinction by American beliefs and practices.

Sound like anybody you know?

What shall we do when infant baptism comes unglued from its historical Christendom apparatus and no longer serves as a rite of entry to civil society?

Personal reasons: Granted, I am not aware of any Mennonites today who would require rebaptism for Christians of other communions to join their congregations. But many Mennonites remain willing to rebaptize new members who request it for personal reasons. In other words, because the theological and political function of Catholic infant baptism has changed, the prevailing Mennonite rationale for rebaptism has also changed. Today our willingness to rebaptize is most often rationalized in ways that seem to owe more to the Declaration of Independence than the Schleitheim Confession. We justify rebaptism by arguing that the individual did not choose her infant baptism and cannot remember it, so it somehow lacks "meaning" or "personal importance" for her.

I have grave theological concerns about this language. It suggests that baptism serves essentially private functions, aiding the candidate's pursuit of happiness by providing her with fond memories and a sense of personal spiritual enrichment.

In 21st-century America, rebaptism may serve to underwrite individualism, which is as perilous to Mennonites as to Catholics. In America, and perhaps elsewhere, rebaptism contributes to the modern deception that baptism is a private matter and not a public initiation to God's alternative

Continued on page 10

By handing baptism over to the choice of the individual, we are eating ourselves alive.

Continued from page 9

society. Mennonites ought to stop rebaptizing people—even those who request it—and not only because rebaptism is disrespectful of Catholics. In our context, rebaptism is also disrespectful of our own Mennonite commitment to the church as a public reality larger than the individual. Our capitulation to the autonomy of the individual, manifested in our ongoing willingness to rebaptize upon request, is not only a kind of predation on other communions; it is a kind of cannibalism of our own. By handing baptism over to the choice of the individual, we are eating ourselves alive.

After all, if we accept a wayward Catholic's rejection of her baptism on the grounds that she did not choose it and can't remember it, what answer can we muster for the departing Mennonite who rejects our faith on the grounds that he was merely born and raised Mennonite?

The world is not medieval anymore. All Christian communions have now been removed from power by Western liberalism. Thus have we come, ironically, to a historical moment when Mennonites may need to reject Anabaptism in order to preserve the Mennonite association of baptism with discipleship and the Mennonite disassociation of baptism from power. Especially in places like southeastern Iowa, it has become fair to ask which community is closer to being in power, Mennonites or Catholics. The answer, of course, is neither. Both now stand in solidarity as varied expressions of God's alternative society, distinct from the dominant power of American individualism.

In order to be radical in their proclamation to such power, Mennonites should refuse rebaptism to every person who wishes to act as his own pope. Perhaps then we may all, together, eat the flesh and blood of Jesus instead of our own.

Chad S. Mason is pastor at Christ Community Church, a Mennonite Church USA congregation in Des Moines, Iowa.

From Article 11 ("Baptism") of Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective:

We believe that the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin. Baptism is also a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk in the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers are baptized into Christ and his body by the Spirit, water, and blood.

...

Christian baptism is for those who confess their sins, repent, accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and commit themselves to follow Christ in obedience as members of his body, both giving and receiving care and counsel in the church. Baptism is for those who are of the age of accountability and who freely request baptism on the basis of their response to Jesus Christ in faith.

Baptism and confirmation address a critical issue.

Musings on baptism

by John A. Lapp

Last June 3, our grandson Robert Lerch was baptized at age 15 into the body of Christ at Germond's Presbyterian Church in New City, N.Y. Three years earlier, we witnessed the baptism of his sister Sarah.

Robert was the only one of nine new members to be baptized. The others were confirmed. The pastor spoke on baptism as a sign of crossing over to new life. I was slightly jarred by her comment on the baptismal font "as the womb of new birth," but the metaphor does have a suggestive meaning.

A Mennonite sitting through a Presbyterian sacrament is bound to have many contradictory thoughts. Alice and I were overwhelmed with gratitude for the vitality of Germond's faith community. Our daughter and husband serve on the session (council) and board of deacons (congregational welfare). They have many close friends and are known as having a Mennonite past. Sarah is already active as a Sunday school teacher and serves as the youth member on the Pastoral Nominating Committee.

The nurturing of the youth being confirmed into the congregation was an interesting process on which to reflect. Infant baptism is understood as a declaration by parents "to raise their children as Christians." Baptism of infants is thus understood as the symbolic passing on of the tradition from "generation to generation." This is as significant for parenting as for children. Adult baptism and confirmation at Germond's are a verbal and public declaration of "grace received" and an intent "to be faithful in the life of the church." Germond's explicitly says that young people of confirmation age "may seek baptism upon confession of faith." That is why Robert was baptized.

As an heir of Anabaptism, I pondered the gains and losses of our tradition by its insistence on believer's baptism. I surely would not urge any change to our patterns, but I wonder whether the act of infant baptism helps solidify the parental obligation of raising children in the fear of the Lord and nurturing for life in the church? Does the individualism implied in believer's baptism require extra effort to nurture the communal obligations of church life? Amid the hyperindividualism of modern American culture—including much church life—baptism and confirmation, as public signs of joining the Christian movement, need to be strong statements. I am grateful for the practice of child dedication in many Mennonite congregations as a symbol of parental commitment to passing on the tradition. (Both Robert and Sarah were dedicated as infants at Madison (Wis.) Mennonite Church.)

Another musing on this occasion was whether our grandchildren will keep alive their parents' and grandparents' practice of believer's baptism or will join the Protestant and Catholic majority practicing infant baptism? In an ecumenical epoch and a time of growing secularism, perhaps the time and mode of baptism is less significant than during the past five centuries.

Perhaps the time and mode of baptism is less significant than during the past five centuries.

The tenor of my musings was warm and positive toward grandson Robert's public "crossing over" as well as toward the public announcement of the other eight youth being confirmed.

But there is the nagging concern expressed so well by Dietrich Bonhoeffer 65 years ago: "The feature of the Constantinian age was not that the Christian community baptized its children but that baptism as such became a qualification of civic life. The false development lies not in infant baptism but in this secular qualification. The two should clearly be distinguished."

That was the critical issue in 1525 and continues to be a critical issue today, particularly in the United States. As I look over the Christian landscape, the link of baptism and public life appears to be a critical issue, however and whenever one is baptized. Baptism and confirmation are a sign and announcement that we indeed move in and out of two realities, both of which strive to be ultimate concerns. Both desire total commitment. For believers, parents and congregations, baptism means there is always a question mark over civic pretensions. This is what I hope all six of our grandchildren never forget.

I was intrigued at a subsequent coffee hour conversation that day at Germond's that some people there were aware of World War II conscientious objectors and spoke approvingly of that alternative to civic demands. Then I recalled there were as many in CPS or prison during World War II who were baptized as babies or not baptized at all as there were those baptized as adults.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

John A. Lapp is a member of Lititz (Pa.) Mennonite Church and executive secretary emeritus of Mennonite Central Committee.

Free to be different

by Karl Landis

Mennonites who no longer wear prayer coverings or plain suits, who no longer drive black cars and who no longer avoid movies or television tend to be pleased and relieved that they have laid aside these and many other cultural distinctives. But I sometimes wonder if we have been sufficiently thoughtful about the full meaning of our laying these things aside or about the true value of the social practices we have replaced them with.

I wonder if we have lost something in the changes we have embraced.

One evening I enjoyed a drama at our local Mennonite high school that incorporated pop music hits from the 1950s played at full volume and exuberant choreography along with swirls of bright color to suffuse the whole production with fun and excitement. The same school also celebrated at least four section sports titles in public league fall sports. The drama and the sports teams were fun to watch and cheer for, and I

Life-changing obedience looks different in different places and situations.

enjoyed both the excellence of the students' skills in these endeavors and the fun of cheering for the winning team.

Yet I realize that this particular school was founded only 60 years ago for the express purpose of providing an educational alternative that intentionally and specifically excluded participation in theater and public school sports activities. I realize the founders of this school would likely be dismayed to know the very activities they forbade their students are now high-profile components of student life there.

I wonder if we have lost something in the changes we have embraced. Do we now think it was not important to be culturally distinctive (one way of being separate from the world) 60 years ago? Or do we think it was important then but not now? Or perhaps we think we are still distinctive but in different ways.

Shared commitment: At its best, the cultural distinctiveness of the 1940s was based on a shared commitment to obey Christ's teachings and example, even if that meant being outside the cultural mainstream. Mennonites recognized each other as people and as congregations willing to be different from the world in noticeable ways. For centuries, most of those who committed themselves to the Mennonite path expected it to remove them from the cultural mainstream in their time. They understood that the gospel has implications for every area of our lives and that it calls us to be willing to yield anything and everything for the sake of the kingdom of God. They expected to be changed or transformed by their ongoing walk with God and saw yielding to the church as an important part of obeying and following Jesus.

Unfortunately, much of the thinking about how to do this in daily life in the 1940s focused as much on how to dress and how to relate to media and public culture as it did on how to be transformed in character and imagination. The other problem was the expectation that whole conferences and the whole Mennonite denomination would answer the questions about how to dress and how to relate to media and public culture in precisely the same way. As we know, this often degenerated into a faith more focused on conformed behavior than on transformed hearts.

My concern is that when we rightly rejected what often came to be a works-based righteousness, too many of us also discarded the original impulse to follow Christ together in life-transforming or self-sacrificing ways. In our eagerness to re-establish meaningful personal faith, we have often relied on an approach to faith that allows each of us to work out our own answers to lifestyle questions. The problem is that we often need our brothers and sisters to call us on and to inspire us into radical discipleship. Left to our own devices, we are likely to be distracted and seduced by affluence and personal comfort. In our time, the messages that promote affluence and personal comfort pour in like a torrent and are far more colorful, far more enticing and far more carefully crafted than the ones that promote service, sacrifice and virtue. As a result, too often we have valued individualism, affluence and materialism over radical obedience. And we hesitate to challenge our brothers and sisters on these matters because inappropriate challenges in the church left such a bad taste in the souls of the previous generation.

Are we still noticeably different from the world as Christ-followers today? Are we still bound together by the desire or impulse to obey and follow Jesus even if it means being seen as unusual in the broader culture? Or are we only willing to obey him as long as we can be seen as successful in American culture?

In our eagerness to re-establish meaningful personal faith, we have often relied on an approach to faith that allows each of us to work out our own answers to lifestyle questions.

Cultural setting: If we define individualism as each individual making his or her own decisions without much concern for what is happening with other individuals or for how these decisions affect other individuals, and we define congregationalism as each congregation making its own decisions without much concern for what is happening in other congregations or for how these decisions affect other congregations, then these terms define us fairly well. They at least define what we

Continued on page 14

Our lifestyles (especially the way we spend our leisure time) and work styles often limit the time and energy we can invest in meaningful conversations and relationships.

Continued from page 13

are tempted to do and are encouraged to do by the cultural setting in the United States. While I acknowledge that it is important for each individual and each congregation to be thoughtful and purposeful, it is also important for all of us to be yielded in some meaningful way to a larger body of fellow believers.

What is the answer? It may lie in carrying out two seemingly contradictory tasks:

1. Preach and live out a demanding gospel. Call people to radical, even risky obedience to the model and teachings of Jesus. But then:

2. Give each other the freedom to mature into that obedience in different ways and in different expressions. Realize that we all start at a different place and grow at different speeds. Also realize that mature expressions of obedience may not all look the same and that our congregations, conferences and denomination are actually richer for the variety of expressions this produces.

We see this dynamic played out in the early church in Acts 15. After the Jerusalem council, new Gentile believers were released from the complicated and burdensome specifics that defined Jewish religious practice, yet Paul continued to call them to life-changing obedience that was evident in their behavior, their attitudes and their relationships (e.g., Romans 12-14, Ephesians 4-5). Life-changing obedience looked different in different places and in different situations, but the same principle was at work.

We can hold these two tasks in tension by engaging in honest, encouraging conversations with each other that begin with

1. listening to the Scriptures and to the Holy Spirit, asking him to guide us into God's truth. These conversations can then move on to

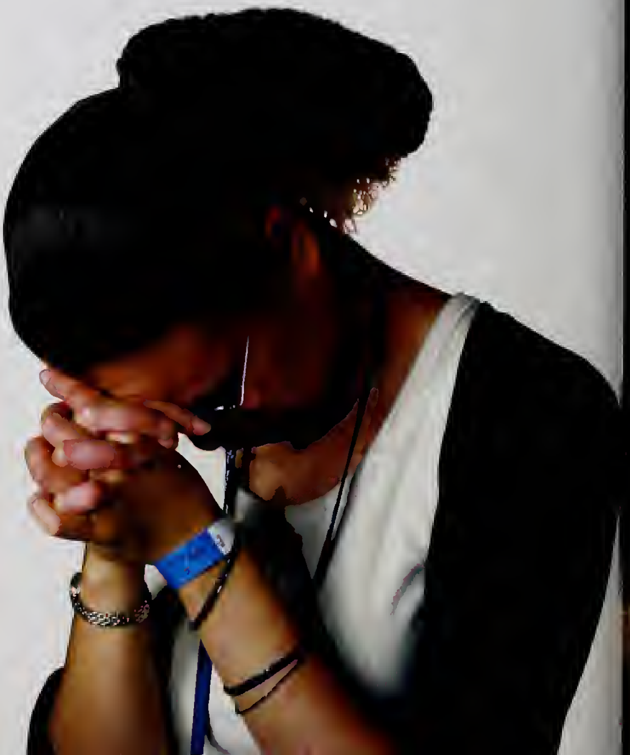
2. clarifying the commitments and understandings that shape our identity, that bind us together in faith. These are expressed in our confession of faith, in various statements of core values and in shared practices. These conversations then need to move on even further to

3. lovingly asking each other how our lives express or incarnate our shared commitments and understandings. We should trust each other enough within our congregations, conferences and the denomination to ask each other probing questions about how we live out our shared commitments and understandings and to wrestle with the answers together, quick to give each other the benefit of the doubt.

One reason we do this less often than we should is that it takes time and energy to engage in meaningful conversation and even more time and energy to engage in meaningful relationship. As any parent knows, it is also inconvenient and sometimes painful. Conversations about deeper issues usually pop up at unexpected and inconvenient times. Our lifestyles (especially the way we spend our leisure time) and work styles often limit the time and energy we can invest in meaningful conversations and relationships.

If I follow my own advice, I will review my experiences at my local Mennonite high school in my prayers, approach the teachers or administrators involved to clarify the shared understandings that relate to drama and sports and give them the benefit of the doubt as we talk about how well our drama and sports teams express those commitments and understandings. Sometimes our expressions will be noticeably different from the world, and sometimes they may not, but our motivation for what we are doing will always be distinctive if we are people committed to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Karl Landis is director of leadership development for Lancaster Mennonite Conference and attends New Life Fellowship in Ephrata, Pa.



The 4 renderings

by Ted Lewis

The fourth rendering (good for evil) is qualitatively different from the others on several levels.

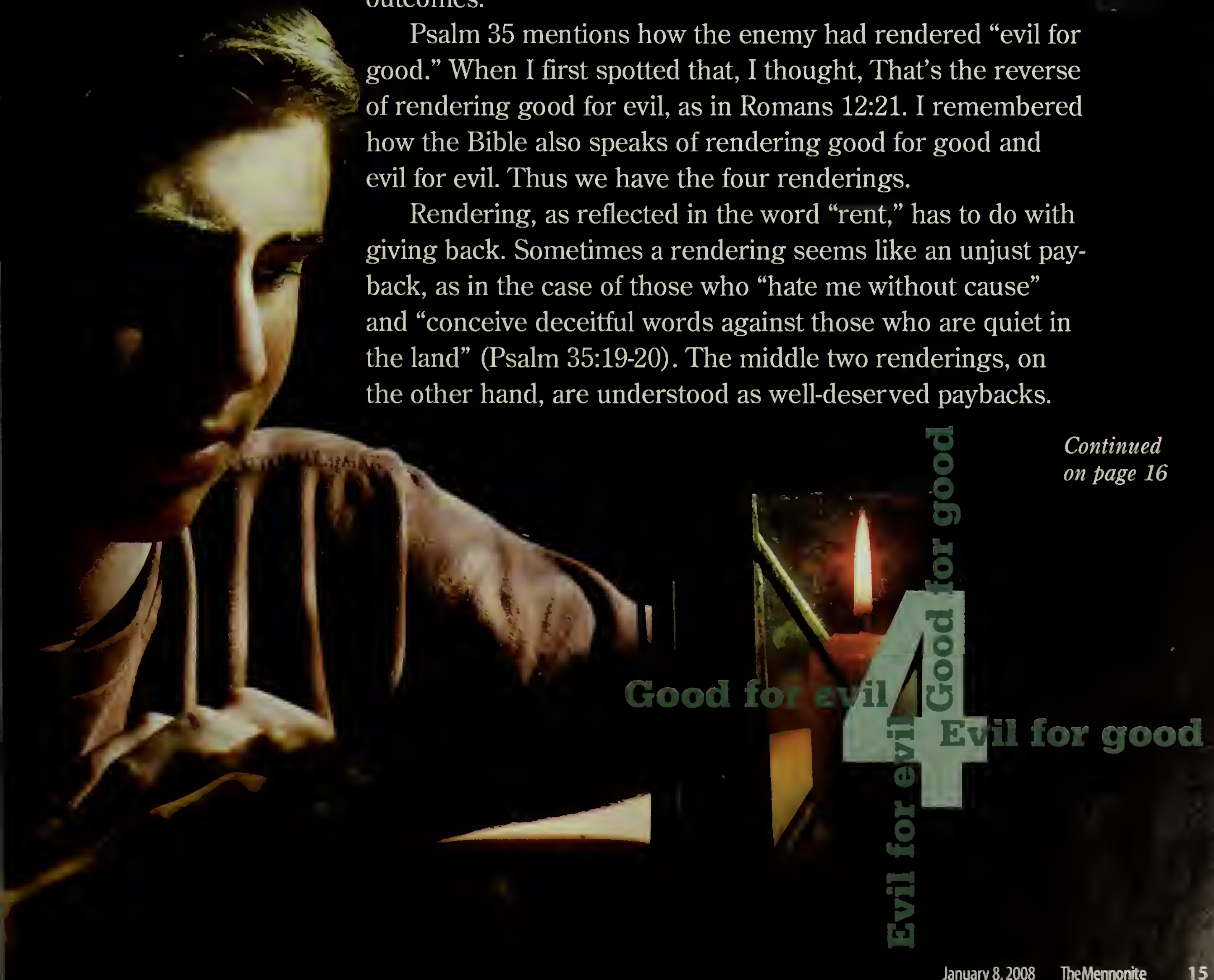
It is ironic that the Psalm from which we get the phrase "quiet in the land" is a boisterous, fist-shaking poem. The writer urges God to fight back on his behalf, to contend with those who contend with him. Psalm 35 almost sets the mold for other Psalmists who plead for vindication against ruthless enemies.

Mennonites from past centuries who latched onto the "quiet in the land" motif were perhaps more aware of this situation. They could identify with Israelites who were persecuted "without cause" and who struggled with a new morality that required bold trust in a God who would take care of all outcomes.

Psalm 35 mentions how the enemy had rendered "evil for good." When I first spotted that, I thought, That's the reverse of rendering good for evil, as in Romans 12:21. I remembered how the Bible also speaks of rendering good for good and evil for evil. Thus we have the four renderings.

Rendering, as reflected in the word "rent," has to do with giving back. Sometimes a rendering seems like an unjust payback, as in the case of those who "hate me without cause" and "conceive deceitful words against those who are quiet in the land" (Psalm 35:19-20). The middle two renderings, on the other hand, are understood as well-deserved paybacks.

Continued on page 16



Continued from page 15

Looking further into the Bible, we will come to see how the fourth rendering (good for evil) is qualitatively different from the others on several levels.

The story of David and Abigail, reminiscent of an old western movie, helps illuminate the four renderings. It falls after the Goliath story but before Saul's death (1 Samuel 25). David has been leading a mercenary band that's been hanging out near the sheep lands of Nabal. He figures his men could get in on the shearing-time festivities since they had provided protection for the shepherds, so he sends messengers with his request.

David's hope for hospitality reveals his thinking about good being returned for good. It's a conventional exchange. Jesus touched on it in the Sermon on the Mount: I invite you over for Sunday dinner, and you should invite me over for a Sunday dinner. But Nabal doesn't see it this way. "Why should I give my bread and meat to men coming from who knows where?"

Violent responses arise because people can't imagine any other method.

When David learns of this, he says, "Put on your swords." In other words, "If he's going to spurn our request, then we will render it with violence." Evil for evil always seeks legitimacy whereby an unjustified harm is met with a justified harm. "They've got it coming to them." In this ancient context, "an eye for an eye" was actually instituted to restrain a disproportionate rendering of evil for evil.

One of Nabal's servants gets wind of David's reaction and alerts Nabal's wife, Abigail. He testifies that David's men were "very good to us," suggesting Nabal's partial responsibility for the impending disaster. Abigail, losing no time, arranges for a truckload of food to be given to David. She also goes in person to parley with David, riding her donkey behind all the food. Nabal knows nothing of this.

At this point the text shifts into David's thinking when Abigail enters the canyon. "What a waste of time to protect Nabal's flocks," he mulls. "He has paid me back evil for good." At the extremity of his reaction, David says, "May God be as rough on me if by morning I leave alive one male of his household." It's hard not to think of how this mindset may still operate in the same region today.

Abigail has risked entrance into this zone of high-pitched violence. She halts the advance of the mercenaries, and delivers a diplomatic speech revealing both her shrewdness and vulnerability. Her first words are startling: "Let the blame be on me alone." She puts herself on the line. "Don't pay any more attention to that wicked man Nabal. He's just a 'fool'" (the meaning of his name). She then talks about David's coming kingship, and how he will not want the "burden of needless bloodshed" on his conscience.

On one level, Abigail is relying on a good-for-good scenario, wanting to appease David and prevent a bad outcome. Her virtue of shrewdness is clearly focused on a good end. As in many cultures, the food gift invites reciprocity. But it is her speech, including flattery about David's future, that tips the scale of David's mindset and defuses the escalation of violence.

On a deeper level, then, a good-for-evil dynamic is at work. Here we see how Abigail's virtue of vulnerability is sensitive to the means, regardless of outcomes. The fact that she is willing to take the blame for the situation is her way of absorbing all the dysfunction of the previous miscommunications. "Let's forget the previous downward spiral of evil for evil. Let's imagine a better outcome for all involved."

According to John Paul Lederach, Abigail has the "moral imagination" to envision an outcome of relational unity. Lederach calls such imagination "the art and soul" of peacemaking. Violent responses arise because people can't imagine any other method. But Abigail can see a shalom outcome, and, in her own personhood, she becomes the responsible catalyst to bring about this unity.

People with moral imagination are keenly aware of how good communication is the medium of third way resolutions beyond the conventional fight-or-flight ways. Before David says anything, Abigail speaks of how God kept David from needless bloodshed. She presents a positive future outcome in past-tense language as if it had already happened. Imagine the effect of this on David.

In the wake of such moral goodness—such communication that widens the imagination to a better future and such response-ability that absorbs and nullifies the ill-effect of prior cycles of violence—David praises God and blesses Abigail for keeping him from needless bloodshed. (He also accepts the goodness of the bread, wine, roasted sheep and all the raisin and fig cakes.)

Abigail returns to a drunk Nabal. Next morning she tells everything. The news triggers a stroke; 10 days later he dies. David praises God for all the outcomes but also for keeping him from "doing wrong." Abigail's moral imagination has been contagious to David. Such imagination is woven with a radical trust in the God who oversees outcomes and invites us into means and methods that fit with God's character.

This story is sandwiched between two stories in which Saul is pursuing David to kill him, and in both incidents David takes the moral high ground by restraining himself from killing Saul. Here we see David operating out of a redemptive mindset. But the Abigail story drives home the point that even David can relapse into the conventional evil-for-evil mindset, thus requiring a mediator to transform the situation.

As Abigail was not overcome by evil but overcame evil with good, bearing the faults of Nabal in her own self and sharing the gifts of food, we, too, are invited to not repay evil for evil in our relationships with others. This largely boils down to matters of communication. We are asked to forgo communication responses that build walls and practice communication responses that build bridges.

Psalm 35 is attributed to David. The choice to be silent, to not strike back in retaliation, fits with the plea, "O Lord, do not be silent" (v. 22). A similar Psalm of David (38) describes how he is both deaf and dumb in the face of enemies who use damaging communication. "It is for you, O Lord, that I wait; it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer" (v. 15). Perhaps his trust, embodied through restraint, was reinforced by Abigail's moral imagination.

The New Testament notches up our understanding of returning good for evil. It is not simply a matter of nonviolent strategy to get a certain outcome, and it is not simply a matter of nonresistance for the sake of our personal integrity. Both of these come into play, but the primary focus is doing good in the face of evil for the sake of the other. It is salvific. It is the ethic of "agape" love.

Jesus gives us the archetypal mold for rendering good for evil. In concert with God, who takes the bridge-building initiative to bring relational unity, and doing this in person through Jesus, we see how Jesus, throughout his ministry, embodied the character traits of agape love and vulnerability, which, through his death, became salvific for us.

Peter captures this well (1 Peter 2:23): "When he was abused, he did not return abuse." Jesus, faced with violence, did not sin. Instead, "he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly." Again, the God of all outcomes. And he "bore our sins in his body." Specifically, our self-centered sins of rendering evil back to others in thought, word and deed. Jesus absorbed such sin "so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness."

Rendering evil for good shows a disdain for ethics. Rendering evil for evil or good for good shows a regard for conventional ethics, which most societies normalize. All three involve strong human-initiated efforts to control the outcomes for both the giver and the recipients.

Far from being passive, such trust frees us to take risks as we place ourselves in situations where we become the transformative element in evil situations.

Rendering good for evil, however, shows a trust in kingdom ethics. It is no longer a matter of payback but a matter of overcoming. In contrast to the former three, where trust in God (to dispense justice or wealth) is lacking, this fourth rendering requires full trust in God's character. Far from being passive, such trust frees us to take risks as we place ourselves in situations where we become the transformative element in evil situations.

Through Jesus, who was silent before his persecutors, we meet a God who is not silent. Through Jesus we meet a God whose means and ends have full integrity. As we continue in the legacy of "the quiet in the land," let us seek to render good for evil in all situations, with risk-taking love for the sake of others.

Ted Lewis is active with the Church of the Servant King in Eugene, Ore.

Human sacrifice

Ernest D. Martin, Columbiana, Ohio, is a retired pastor and writer.

We hear a lot about the ultimate sacrifices made for our freedoms. It's commonly assumed that the price for our freedoms is soldiers giving their lives for the country. It's sad to hear how many U.S. military personnel have died in the current war. Add the casualties resulting from resorting to military engagements in the past. However, it should be clear that wars are not won by dying but by killing.

Neither the original nor the revised line of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" are in touch with reality. Changing from "as he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free" to "let us live to make men free" still avoids the grim military business of "let us kill to make men free." The sacrifice of lives must also take into account the lives of the "enemy" people and the euphemistically labeled "collateral damage." All these are sacrificed for named and unnamed leadership goals under the rubric of national security.

Alongside this commonly confused perspective of sacrifice, there is another way to consider warfare. When political and military leaders send recruits into what they know is harm's way, they are thereby choosing to sacrifice the lives of the soldiers. Beyond body count, the sacrifice includes ongoing effects in physical and mental well-being and marital and family stress. Why this sacrifice of human lives? Outside any criteria for a just war, the motives of political and military leaders for engaging in war seem to have to do with ideological ambitions and corporate greed.

Decisions to sacrifice human lives stems from the myth of redemptive violence. The notion that violence can be stopped with violence, that the end justifies the means, has been the stance of Christendom ever since Constantine merged church and state. Islam holds the same view. Diplomatic efforts, if pursued, have had some success. But the prevailing opinion of political leaders and many Christians is that the way of Jesus is too idealistic and impractical in the real world. How many resonate with David W. Shenk saying, "How I wish I could meet Osama bin Laden and embrace him and tell him that I am an ambassador of the King who loves him. I would invite him to repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation" (*Journeys of the Muslim Nation and the Christian Church*, Herald Press, 2003)?

I see no essential difference between this intentional human sacrifice in war and the practice of votive human sacrifice in some Near Eastern pagan religions that also crept into ancient Israel. The prophets of God denounced this practice in the strongest of terms, as an abomination. As the prophet Jeremiah charged, the kings and officials built high places in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, adjoining Jerusalem, for the people to sacrifice their sons and daughters to Molek, the detestable god of the Ammonites. (Is the Pentagon the modern equivalent of Molek?) It was not that Israel had intended to abandon Yahweh. They attempted to syncretize worship of Molek into worship of their covenant God. Similarly today, God-talk and Christian profession are held along with the sacrifice of the younger generation. In the language of ancient Israel's shameful behavior, it's putting "children through the fire." To what God-honoring ends?

Another glaring example of human sacrifice is the sacrifice of yet-to-be-born babies to the gods of convenience and hedonism. These casualties far outnumber the casualties of war. Human life becomes expendable when creature comfort values and self-interest become the determinative devotions of life.

The prophet Micah, in the eighth century B.C., heard questions raised about what kind of sacrifices would satisfy God, and he responded with a timeless answer. Reread Micah 6:6-8 and listen for what intersects with wrongful sacrifices today. The disgraceful sacrifices of human life in our world are not learned from Micah—and certainly not from Jesus.

We hear of instances of soldiers intentionally falling on an explosive to save comrades. Risking life and losing life for the benefit of another follows the example of Jesus' sacrificial love. But initiating, supporting and participating in human sacrifice for advancing personal, ideological and economic goals is God-rejecting idolatry. Kyrie eleison. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Integrity and faithfulness**—J. Daniel Hess
- **Grad returns with passion for youth ministry** —Fern Clemmer

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

Mennonite groups find unity in Congo

Fifty men and women from three conferences discuss new church models.

Fifty Congolese from different parts of the world's second largest concentration of Mennonites gathered in Kinshasa, Congo, Nov. 22-25, 2007, for the first National Forum of the Congo Forum for Conversation, a process facilitated by Mennonite World Conference (MWC) to encourage reflection among Congolese Mennonites about the future of their churches and to reflect on new models for relationships with the global Anabaptist-related community.

The group embodied a diversity that has rarely been seen before at Mennonite church gatherings in Congo. Made up of an equal number of women and men, the participants included young and old lay people and some church leaders. Each of the three Mennonite denominations in Congo—the Congo Mennonite Brethren Church, Congo Evangelical Mennonite Church and Congo Mennonite Church—was represented.

The forum's major ongoing priority is Congolese inter-Mennonite relationships.

"The group was unanimous in citing this as a matter of central importance," says Toss Mukwa, consultant to the process and member of the Mennonite Brethren church. "It also came as a great surprise to us as organizers."

Participants expressed a strong desire for greater awareness of the Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage and values and greater unity and cooperation among Mennonites of the three Congolese denominations. The group also decided on a name change to Congolese Inter-Mennonite Forum for Conversation (CIFC).

"It was a particular joy to experience for the first time a sense of communion and inter-Mennonite fellowship, which I had long awaited," said Jean Ngolo. "This opportunity offered by MWC allowed my brothers and sisters and me to return to our roots, to our identity and to our values, which have seemed in the past to be only empty words."

The CIFC evolved from discussions over several years among the Mennonite denominations of Congo, MWC, mission and service agencies with history of involvement in Congo, and churches in other parts of the world interested in developing relationships with Congolese Mennonites. All parties noted that in Congo, as in many other parts of the world, past models for relationships between churches are no longer effective or desirable.

The primary structure of the CIFC is 10 reflection groups made up of 15 people each in 10 different locations around the country. Each group includes Mennonites from all of the denominations in the particular location. For the past year these groups have been meeting quarterly to discuss questions such as these:

- What have you learned from the history of relationships of your church with mission and service agencies, and what were the results of learning this?
- What can Congolese Mennonites bring to the global Mennonite community and vice versa?
- What is the appropriate role or roles for central church leadership in a church where the membership plays an active and engaged role?
- Describe the desired models and roles for future relationships among Congolese Mennonite communities.

Tim Lind

Eugenie Muangala, left, and Kasayi Ndakume, right, converse with Jackson Benandumbe at the CIFC National Forum meeting in Kinshasa, Congo.

The November forum was an attempt to analyze the various groups' findings and to plan for the second year of reflection group meetings. Four representatives of each of the 10 groups attended the Kinshasa meeting. The CIFC is scheduled to continue for another two years of reflection group meetings and annual fora.

"This gathering was unique because it brought together for the first time members of the grass roots," said Rev. Germaine Kazadi of Mbuji Mayi. "In observing the atmosphere of our work together during these three days, I was struck by the enthusiasm of the participants. They freely expressed their ideas, and they gave the best of themselves in pursuit of changes between the Mennonite churches of Congo on one hand and the global Anabaptist community on the other."

Currently the costs of the CIFC process are shared by churches and agencies, including Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Mennonite Church Canada Witness, Mennonite Church USA, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Central Committee and MWC. Groups are welcome to make use of the CIFC structure and/or findings.—*Tim C. Lind of Mennonite World Conference*

> This opportunity allowed my brothers and sisters and me to return to our roots, to our identity, and to our values, which have seemed in the past to be only empty words.
> —Jean Ngolo

Top 10 news stories during 2007 for Mennonite Church USA

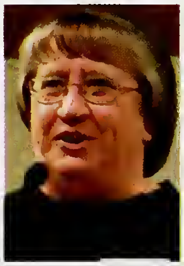
1. Bluffton University mourns seven deaths

A charter bus carrying Bluffton (Ohio) University's baseball team crashed at an Interstate 75 exit in Atlanta on March 2. The deceased include Bluffton students Zachary Arend (Oakwood, Ohio); Tyler Williams (Lima, Ohio); David Betts (Bryan, Ohio); Scott Harmon (Lima, Ohio) and Cody Holp (Arcanum, Ohio); the bus driver, Jerome Niemeyer, and his wife, Jean Niemeyer, both of Columbus Grove, Ohio. (See March 20.)

2. Untimely passings of MC USA leaders

Lee Eshleman

Anne Stuckey


Miriam Martin

Lee Eshleman, 43, lost a long struggle with depression and died by suicide at his Harrisonburg, Va., home on May 17. Eshleman was a part of the dramatic duo Ted & Lee. Ted & Lee performances at the Mennonite Church USA convention in San José, Calif., were canceled. (See June 5.)

Anne Stuckey, associate pastor at Zion Mennonite Church in Archbold, Ohio, and a columnist for *The Mennonite*, died May 31 in an automobile accident near Peru, Ill. Stuckey, 54, of Somerset, Mich., apparently lost control of her vehicle on a rain-slicked Interstate 80. (See June 19.)

Miriam Martin, conference minister and administrator of Mennonite Church USA's Atlantic Coast Conference and vice chair for *The Mennonite*'s board of directors, died July 3 after a brief illness. She was 64. Martin had worked in conference ministries for 16 years. In 2003, she became conference minister and in 2005 was named Atlantic Coast's missional church development coordinator. (See Aug. 7.)

3. Mennonite Church USA meets at San José

Nearly 6,300 people participated in Mennonite Church USA's biennial convention in 2007, held July 2-6 in San José, Calif. This was the first Mennonite Church USA convention to be held on the West Coast. Prior to this convention, the last one on the West Coast was the (former) Mennonite Church's Oregon '91 convention in Eugene.

Delegates at San José 2007 passed a resolution for Mennonite Church USA to support a bill before the U.S. Congress apologizing to Native Americans for their treatment throughout U.S. history and a resolution to continue working at a plan that could provide health insurance for all pastors and church workers in Mennonite Church USA congregations. (See July 24.)

The editorial staff at *The Mennonite* reviewed news stories published during 2007 and prioritized them for this Top 10 list. Anna Groff wrote this compilation.

4. Lancaster Conference vote on ordination

Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference ministers did not sufficiently affirm a recommendation from the LMC Board of Bishops that would have allowed for the ordination of women. The decision emerged from a ballot count on Jan. 19; all active ordained and licensed ministerial leaders in the conference were eligible to vote. There were 455 active credentialed leaders in LMC. Of the 359 credentialed leaders who voted, 65.74 percent affirmed the recommendation and 34.26 percent did not affirm the recommendation. LMC's constitution requires 66.67 percent for approval. (See Feb 6.)

5. Growing ecumenical relations (theme)

Mennonite Church USA accepted an apology from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In late April, on behalf of the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA, executive director Jim Schrag sent a letter to Mark S. Hanson, ELCA's presiding bishop, thanking the ELCA for adopting a declaration expressing regret for persecution of Anabaptists. (See July 3). Delegates at San José 2007 supported a proposal to join Christian Churches Together, a fellowship of Christian churches in the United States. (See July 24). German Catholics and Mennonites assembled in Hamburg, Germany, Sept. 21-22 for a conference on "Healing of Memories," a joint response of the Association of Mennonite Congregations in Germany and the Roman Catholic German Bishops Conference to the official report "Called

Lowell Brown

Mennonite Church USA executive director Jim Schrag (right) offers a prayer of confession for sins against Native Americans. Steve Cheramie Risingsun is at left.

Bluffton University baseball team's bus accident in Atlanta leads the list. MCC sets meeting with Iran's Ahmadinejad: MWC leaders meet with Pope.

Together to Be Peacemakers." (See Nov. 6.)

Mennonite World Conference sent a delegation of 10 people to meet with Catholic church leaders, including Pope Benedict XVI, in Vatican City, Oct. 18-23. (See Nov. 20 and photo at right.)

6. MCC sets meeting with Ahmadinejad

Amid tensions between Iran and the United States, Mennonite Central Committee coordinated a Sept. 26 meeting between Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and more than 100 religious leaders from the United States and Canada. The meeting, held in New York City, was the third such dialogue MCC helped organize between the Iranian president and U.S. religious leaders. (See Oct 16.)

7. Mennonite Church USA delegation to Congo

To explore church-to-church relationships between two Mennonite conferences in Congo and Mennonite Church USA, a delegation of 13 people traveled to the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Central Africa, for two weeks in February. The conversation between Mennonite Church USA and leaders of the Congolese churches began at the Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Zimbabwe in 2003. Jim Schrag, executive director of Mennonite Church USA, says a church-to-church relationship works to meet one of the denomination's goals of nurturing global relationships. (See March 20.)

8. Church Member Profile 2006 released

Conrad L. Kanagy, associate professor of sociology at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, released data about Mennonite Church USA members that was part of the 2006 Church Member Profile. The survey found that the average age of Mennonites rose from 49 in 1989 to 54, that racial/ethnic congregations are growing, and the percent of "noncradle" Mennonites—neither parent being Mennonite—has risen since 1972 from 17 percent to 26 percent. Mennonite Church USA also had 16 percent fewer U.S. members than did its predecessor denominations in 1989. (See Feb. 6.)

9. Health insurance plan for pastors

Delegates to San José 2007 voted to continue working at a plan that could provide health insurance for all pastors and church workers in Mennonite Church USA congregations. Mennonite Church USA delegates began working on health-care access at Atlanta 2003 by authorizing the Healthcare Access Initiative. Next steps for the plan: working with denominational agencies and schools to enlist their participation; working with area conferences; and finally inviting congregations to participate. (See July 24.)

Citta del Vaticano

Mennonite World Conference president Nancy Heisey presents a framed image of Anabaptist martyr Dirk Willems to Pope Benedict XVI.

10. Täuferjahr opens in Switzerland

A March 24 service at the Protestant church in Langnau, Switzerland, marked the beginning of the "Anabaptist commemorative year" in this canton's rural Emmental region. More than 200 events recalled the persecution of Anabaptists that began during the Reformation and did not end until the early 19th century. (See May 1.)

Marathana Prothro

Children in Mukedi, Democratic Republic of Congo, met with members of the Mennonite Church USA delegation in February 2007.

Documenting Colombia's suffering, hope

Justapaz, peace council release second report on the violence against churches.

Some Colombian government statistics suggest that human rights violations are improving in Colombia, but the churches offer a fuller version of what's happening in their recently released second report on human rights called "A Prophetic Call."

Janna Hunter-Bowman, a Mennonite Central Committee worker, coordinates a documentation and advocacy program that records the suffering and hope of the Colombian Protestant churches. Justapaz, a Colombian Mennonite peace and justice organization, and the Peace Commission of the Evangelical Council of Colombia released their second report on the violence suffered by the Protestant churches.

Hunter-Bowman says the report indicates there is still "a long way to go in achieving peace, and the conflict can't be solved militarily."

This report on international humanitarian law and human rights violations against church and church members documents findings from all of 2006.

Regional team members and church members are being trained in an ongoing process to gather testimonies from victims, their family members and church leaders. The information collected included 16 homicides and many cases of people who were forced to flee, used as human shields, tortured or submitted to other human rights violations. Death threats were the most common form of aggression.

The groups perpetrating these violations come from different armed groups. They belong to guerrilla groups, paramilitaries and government forces.

Many who shared their stories were afraid, Hunter-Bowman says. They didn't know if their sharing would bring more persecution to their families. In spite of the intimidation, the survivors still speak.

Further concerns about safety were raised when the offices of Justapaz were burglarized on June 14. Two computers containing information important to the report were stolen. One had a database of testimonies detailing abuse and information on how churches were working for peace.

Justapaz has continued its work of reporting without further harassment. Hunter-Bowman attributes this in part to the "grace we experience because of the prayer and advocacy on the part of the church."

"In suffering there [are] always signs of hope," says Alix Lozano, president of the Mennonite Church of Colombia.

Javier Pinzón, whose testimony is in the report, is an example of this transformation. A colonel in the military for 28 years, he resigned because he "in no way could continue taking up arms and preparing for war." He found the Mennonite Brethren Church and committed his life to Christ. Today Pinzón is farming, with the goal of creating an Anabaptist community to serve the rural community of El Rodeo. With others he is starting a program to teach children to care for the land.—*Cathryn Clinton of Mennonite Central Committee*

In suffering there are always signs of hope.
—Alix Lozano

Political advocacy for Colombian Anabaptists

"We don't talk about politics, yet at the same time there are people in our churches who are living it passionately," says Manuel Mosquera of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Colombia. Mosquera and 36 leaders and members of Colombian Anabaptist denominations gathered to share their perspectives and vision of political advocacy Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 2007. The gathering in Bogotá was sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee and brought together representatives from the Mennonite Church, Brethren in Christ Church and the Mennonite Brethren Church. Speakers shared their perspectives on Colombia's political and social realities. Panel discussions focused on the biblical basis, models and values for political advocacy. Arturo Orrego of the Brethren in Christ Church asked participants to recognize that in politics, taking a neutral stance is the same as taking a position of silent approval.—*Shalom Wiebe of Mennonite Central Committee*

"We found Service Adventure to be an invaluable opportunity for our son, one that helped focus his interests before entering college."
> Barth Hague,
parent of C.J. (left)

Explore service options with your son or daughter at **Service.MennoniteMission.net**

C.J. Hague, Service Adventure participant from 2006–07, with Hershal Morgan, who takes classes at Martin's Hospitality Center, in Albuquerque, N.M.

Mennonite Mission Network
The mission agency of Mennonite Church USA

Asian churches pursue merger with MWC

Asia Mennonite Conference to be Asia Caucus in Mennonite World Conference.

Representatives from the Asia Mennonite Conference decided in an Oct. 10-14, 2007, meeting in Tokyo to move ahead on an "outline of merger" with Mennonite World Conference. According to the proposal, AMC will be known as the Asia Caucus within the structure of MWC and comply with the MWC constitution. Within the Asia region it will continue to carry the name Asia Mennonite Conference in its communication and programmatic involvement.

The fundamental question was whether AMC and MWC should remain separate while developing a closer relationship or merge structurally in some way.

The outline was prepared by Larry Miller, MWC general secretary, then revised by the AMC representatives. Further development of the proposal will occur prior to and at a joint meeting of the AMC and MWC executive committees in July. Implementation may include setting up an MWC/AMC office with a paid facilitator.

Discussions on the relationship between Asia Mennonite Conference and Mennonite World Conference began in 1999. In 2005, the AMC Executive Committee accepted in principle AMC merging with MWC. The following year, the MWC Executive Committee stated its readiness to proceed with this option.

Sheldon Sawatzky

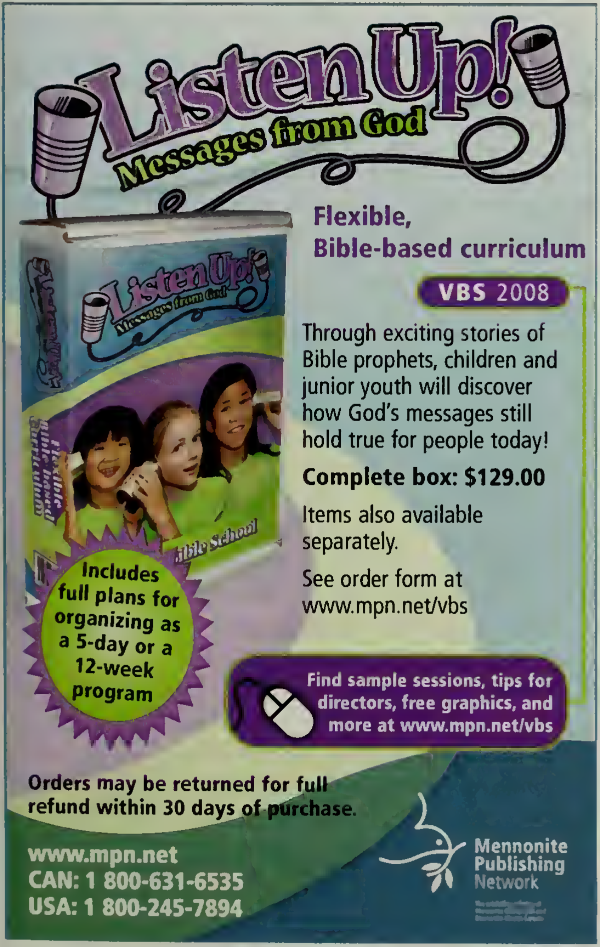
A group of delegates at the Asia Mennonite Conference meeting.

In the AMC revised proposal, the AMC conference delegates will be the Asia Caucus delegates chosen in accordance with MWC guidelines.

As part of the AMC merger proposal, AMC will assume responsibility for the formation of an Asian regional mission fellowship related to GMF. The Asia Mission Fellowship may include members not part of AMC or MWC.

The AMC will proceed with planning for the Asia Mennonite youth discipleship training and work camp program for Southeast Asia scheduled for this July in Thailand.

Representatives from Mennonite conferences in India, Indonesia, Philippines, Taiwan and Japan attended the Tokyo meeting. The Asia representative in the Global Mission Fellowship Planning Committee also participated.—*From a report by Sheldon Sawatzky of Mennonite World Conference*



Listen Up! Messages from God

Flexible, Bible-based curriculum

VBS 2008

Through exciting stories of Bible prophets, children and junior youth will discover how God's messages still hold true for people today!

Complete box: $129.00

Items also available separately.

See order form at www.mpn.net/vbs

Includes full plans for organizing as a 5-day or a 12-week program

Find sample sessions, tips for directors, free graphics, and more at www.mpn.net/vbs

Orders may be returned for full refund within 30 days of purchase.

www.mpn.net
CAN: 1 800-631-6535
USA: 1 800-245-7894

Mennonite Publishing Network

Specializing in web development and customized software

LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

Ten Thousand Villages || Learn about fair trade, find unique gift ideas & purchase
http://www.tenthousandvillages.com/
TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES
SHOP
GIFT IDEAS
COLLECTIONS
GIFT REGISTRY
ARTISANS
FAIR TRADE
STORES & FESTIVALS

Support increases for Iraqi peacemakers

Mennonite Central Committee places first worker in Iraq since 2003.

Daryl Byler

Father Bashar Warda, the president of Babel Seminary, shows John Filson the grounds of a seminary building under construction near Erbil, Iraq. Filson is a Mennonite Central Committee worker who is teaching at the seminary.

Amid changing conflicts in Iraq, Mennonite Central Committee is finding more opportunities to help Iraqi peacemakers bring healing to their divided and traumatized society. Last November, MCC placed its first worker in Iraq since 2003. John Filson of Laguna Niguel, Calif., moved to the northern Iraqi city of Erbil to teach English and conflict transformation at a Chaldean Catholic college and seminary.

MCC usually had one or two workers in Iraq from 1998 to 2003 but withdrew its personnel after the U.S.-led invasion. MCC's partner organizations asked MCC not to place workers in the country because they considered it unsafe to be closely associated with foreigners at the time, according to Daryl Byler, an MCC regional representative.

The seminary's openness to hosting Filson is one sign of the new possibilities for MCC to work in Iraq, Byler says. He and his wife, Cindy Byler, who is also a regional representative, traveled to northern Iraq in late November 2007 to connect with community organizations and churches.

MCC has committed $400,000 to fund projects in Iraq over the next two years, including workshops on conflict resolution and aid for communities where people have been displaced by violence. Additionally, MCC has shipped relief supplies worth more than $1.2 million to Iraq since March 1, 2007, including more than 30,000 blankets. MCC partner organizations are currently distributing many of these items in northern Iraq.

While reports of violence have decreased in Iraq over the last three to six months, the country remains deeply divided. Conflicts have displaced an estimated 2.4 million people within Iraq, and many more have fled the country. Byler says one reason for the decrease in violence is that many Iraqis have fled conflict areas.

Iraq's historic Christian communities, which are mostly Catholic and Orthodox, are struggling to maintain their presence, Byler adds. An estimated 350,000 of Iraq's 800,000 Christians have fled the country since 2003 because of inter-religious tensions and violence. MCC is looking for ways to support Iraqi churches through conflict resolution training and job creation projects.

"There is an openness and receptivity to peace-building principles, and the sense is that now is the time," Cindy Byler says.

Since 2000, MCC has sponsored about 15 Iraqi men and women to attend Summer Peacebuilding Institute, a peace and conflict studies program at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. Daryl Byler says that MCC staff members are currently reconnecting with Iraqi SPI participants, most of whom are Muslims, in order to find new ways to support conflict resolution in Iraq.

According to Byler, SPI participants say that Iraqis need peace-building skills, especially in the current climate of religious and ethnic tension.

"The thing that stands out to them about peace-building concepts is that we don't need to see our identity as a source of being superior to others but rather as a lens for how we see the world," he says. "As Sunni or Shia or Christian, we each bring something wonderful to the table."—*Tim Shenk of Mennonite Central Committee*

befulfilled

"Parish nursing is the most fulfilling type of nursing I've ever done. Exploring the spiritual, physical and mental aspects of a person allows us to treat them holistically."

Tammy Kiser
RN-BSN parish nurse and EMU
parish nursing course instructor

Register now for EMU's online parish nursing course Jan. 14 - Feb. 18, 2008, open to any registered nurse or upper-level nursing student in an RN nursing education program.

EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY
Harrisonburg, VA

emu.edu/nursing/parish • (540) 432-4186 • parishnursing@emu.edu

MCC donates to hospital in North Korea

$200,000 to partner organizations will help children's facility in Kaesong.

Mennonite Central Committee is donating $200,000 to renovate a children's hospital in the city of Kaesong, North Korea. Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital, a century-old hospital complex, has fallen into disrepair in recent decades. According to Kathi Suderman, an MCC representative for northeast Asia, the hospital staff contends with a faulty electrical system, drafty rooms and a lack of basic equipment for surgeries.

The renovation project will provide necessities such as running water, lights and beds to help medical workers improve care for the roughly 35,000 children they treat every year.

MCC is providing funds to Christian Friends of Korea, a partner organization based in Black Mountain, N.C., to carry out the project. Six workers from Christian Friends of Korea will begin renovations this spring, and local workers will complete them.

In recent years, MCC has provided shipments of food to North Korean hospitals. The Kaesong project will be the first hospital renovation that MCC has supported in North Korea since MCC started relief work in the country in 1995, according to Suderman.—*Tim Shenk of Mennonite Central Committee*

Heidi Linton

A doctor attends patients at Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital in North Korea.

New from Cascadia, copublished Herald Press

***Stumbling Toward a Genuine Conversation on Homosexuality*, ed.** Michael A. King. Can excommunicated Mennonites or pastors under discipline, denominational leaders, and persons holding dramatically different views genuinely converse with rather than battle each other? 312 p; $22.95 (not copublished Herald Press)

***Borders and Bridges: Mennonite Witness in a Religiously Diverse World*,** ed. Peter Dula and Alain Epp Weaver. "This volume provides compelling examples of costly, faithful, and creative witness across religious divides." —*Ronald J. R. Mathies.* 188 p; $19.95

***Under Vine and Fig Tree: Biblical Theologies of Land and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*,** ed. Alain Epp Weaver. "This is an excellent resource! There is candor about violence and dispossession without hostility toward Israel." —*Calvin E. Shenk* 204 p; $19.95

Cascadia

www.CascadiaPublishingHouse.com
contact@cascadiapublishinghouse.com
Herald Press: 1-800-245-7894

LCC INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT SEARCH REOPENED

LCC International University, founded in 1991, seeks a president to lead this liberal arts university effective July 2008 or earlier.

Located at Klaipeda, Lithuania, LCC is poised to become an internationally recognized center for Christian scholarship and research and the premier Christian residential university in Eastern Europe.

For additional information, nomination and application instructions, please visit www.lcc.lt/newpresident.

MENNONITE
FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

What makes us different?

Jubilee dividends

We pay the highest rate on the first $500 of regular savings, regardless of the amount over $500 in the account. We do this to encourage thrift among all members, not just those with high balances.

Jubilee dividends: *Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Hesston grad defuses Middle East crisis

Sadi Othman, civilian contractor in Iraq, awarded for role in Iraq-Turkey conflict

Sadi Othman

Sadi Othman, a civilian contractor in Iraq since 2003 and a graduate of Hesston (Kan.) College in 1993, has received a Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service by the U.S. Army for his role in defusing a dangerous regional situation involving Iraq and Turkey.

The award, given on Nov. 26, 2007, states that Othman, Senior Advisor to General David Petreaus, the top U.S. military commander in Iraq, "was personally responsible for the safe return of eight Turkish hostages from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) back to the Turkish army and as a result potentially diffused [sic] an international armed conflict."

The eight Turkish soldiers had been seized Oct. 21, 2007, in a cross-border ambush by the PKK guerrillas, who seek a homeland in southern Turkey. Shortly after the PKK ambush, which also killed 12 Turkish soldiers, Turkey's military began massing troops on the Turkey-Iraq border in preparation for military action inside Iraq.

It took trust on the part of everyone involved to gain the release of the hostages. —Sadi Othman

Othman says he was part of a group that included U.S. military and civilian leaders, Iraqi central government officials and leaders of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), which worked intensively to resolve the crisis as quickly as possible.

Othman was asked by General Petreaus to take over the contacts with some of the key leaders, particularly those in Iraqi Kurdistan, the northern region where Othman worked as a linguist and adviser for a year back in 2003 and 2004.

According to the award's citation, Othman "began a relentless campaign of engagements with Iraqi leaders, the KRG and Kurdish Peshmerga (military) generals."

"During that week," says Othman, "I got maybe only one or two hours of sleep each night."

The award cites Othman's efforts as "resulting in successfully getting all parties to agree to terms to release the Turkish soldiers. Additionally [he] engaged both the KRG President and KRG Prime Minister about using the positive outcome of the hostage crisis as a catalyst to bring a permanent solution to the PKK issue."

"It was a team effort," Othman says. "It took trust on the part of everyone involved to gain the release of the hostages."

A Palestinian-American, Othman's U.S. residence is in Queens, N.Y. As senior adviser to Petreaus, Othman is in his fourth civilian assignment in Iraq in which he has served as linguist and adviser to top U.S. military leaders in that country.

"The type of contacts we made under the leadership of General Petreaus to resolve this hostage crisis is the sort of thing we do day after day here in Iraq," he says. "We work hard at making improvements in the situation at all levels at the grass-roots level, at the national level and at the regional level. It's an extremely demanding and exhausting task. But I continue to do this work because I want to help the Iraqi people."—*Dave Osborne of Hesston College*

Making Sense of the Journey brings together 16 church leaders and educators

Jim Bishop

A book of reflections and stories from 16 church leaders and educators was released at a book signing and celebration held Dec. 6, 2007, at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

Making Sense of the Journey: The Geography of Our Faith authors were present for the unveiling. Standing, from left: Paul Peachey, John R. Martin, Gerald R. Brunk, Calvin E. Shenk, Nancy V. Lee, Robert Lee (co-editor), Calvin W. Redekop, Myron S. Augsburger, Esther K. Augsburger, Edward. B. Stoltzfus. Seated, from left: James R. Bomberger, Albert N. Keim, Samuel L. Horst, Titus W. Bender, Harold D. Lehman, C. Norman Kraus and Ray Gingerich.—*Eastern Mennonite University*

CALENDAR

Sarasota Mennonite Male Voice Festival, conducted by Lloyd Kauffman, Feb. 7-10. Rehearsals will be held at Bahia Vista and Palm Grove Mennonite churches with the final program at **Bahia Vista Mennonite Church**, Feb. 10; 6 p.m. For more information contact 941-870-3737 or pwenger4@comcast.net.

WORKERS

Snyder Belousek, Paula, was ordained as associate pastor at Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., on Dec. 2, 2007.

Yoder, Kevin, was licensed as pastor at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., on Nov. 18, 2007.

Yoder, Sharon, was licensed as pastor at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., on Nov. 18, 2007.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Birk, Ryan Ray, Dec. 6, 2007, to Scott and Kim Kulp Birk, Elkhart, Ind.

Clemmer, Aubrey Mae, Dec. 3, 2007, to Nathanael and Brooke Steury Clemmer, Harleysville, Pa.

Ediger, Samuel Lawrence, Oct. 27, 2007, to Luke and Stephanie Rohr Ediger, Dalton, Ohio.

Eisenhour, Josiah Allen, Nov. 21, 2007, to Tex and Rachel Saner Eisenhour, Goshen, Ind.

Fouse, Grace Houser, Nov. 29, 2007, to Benjamin and Stephanie Houser Fouse, Lowville, N.Y.

Fox, Nathan McLean, Nov. 1, 2007, to Kevin and Tricia Weber Fox, Perkasie, Pa.

Kaufman, Benjamin David, Nov. 23, 2007, to David Lynn and Amanda Hallberg Kaufman, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Landis, Tanis Brielle, Nov. 25, 2007, to Eric and Tracy Landis Landis, Quakertown, Pa.

Miller, Rowan Ropp, Dec, 4, 2007, to Nate and Stacy Ropp Miller, Kalona, Iowa.

Nisly, Eliza Mae and Adie Lee (twins), Nov. 25, 2007, to Ryan and Melissa Nisly, Salem, Ore.

Nolt, Bencsik Eli, Oct. 15, 2007, to Todd and Jessica Bencsik Nolt, Sugar Grove, N.C.

Pennington, Addison Faith and Alexis Marie (twins), Dec. 3, 2007, to Brandy Pennington, Wauseon, Ohio.

Plank, Hailey Grace, Nov. 26, 2007, to Rodney and Tami Williams Plank, Lone Tree, Iowa.

Stoltzfus, Wyatt Stover, Dec. 3, 2007, to Todd and Mandi Dagen Stoltzfus, Harrisonburg, Va.

MARRIAGES

Cartwright/Sommer: Dan Cartwright, Canton, Ohio, and Doris Sommer, Kidron, Ohio, Nov. 10, 2007, at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Gillis/Nolt: Nathan Gillis, Colorado Springs, Colo., and Marika Nolt, Boise, Idaho, Oct. 27, 2007, Beth-El Mennonite Church, Colorado Springs.

Green/Kennell: Glenn Green and Brooke Kennell, Aurora, Colo., Sept. 15, 2007, at Dillon Community Church, Dillon, Colo.

Mennonite Health Assembly
March 27-30, 2008 in St. Louis, Missouri

Doctors, nurses, chaplains, social workers, pastors and board/staff leaders of Anabaptist-related health and human service ministries are gathering for:

- personal, professional and spiritual renewal
- new ideas that integrate faith and work
- networking and continuing education

Join us!

Visit www.mhsonline.org
or call 800-611-4007

Contact us to be added to the mailing list.
Student scholarships available.

Sponsored by MHS Alliance and MMA in collaboration with ABHCM and the Association of Brethren Caregivers

"Communities of Healing & Hope"

DEATHS

Augspurger, Bonita Blasi, 96, Pulaski, Iowa, died Nov. 8, 2007. Spouse: Harold E. Augspurger (deceased). Parents: Edward Walter and Jessi Stone Blasi. Children: William H., Virginia Berryman, Bonnie Payne; 12 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 11 at Pulaski Mennonite Church.

Augspurger, Michael J., 52, Ottumwa, Iowa, died Nov. 27. Parents: Larry A. and Darlene L. Murphy Augspurger. Child: Nyla Howell. Funeral: Dec. 3 at Pulaski Cemetery, Pulaski, Iowa.

Brubacher, Orvie G., 66, Elmira, Ontario, died Oct. 28, 2007, of a stroke. Spouse: Martha Brubacher. Parents: Aden and Elvina Brubacher. Children: Karen Bender, Linda Gilland, Dennis, Gloria Bauman; six grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 1 at Floradale Mennonite Church, Floradale, Ontario.

Buckwalter, Robert Denlinger, 86, Leola, Pa., died Nov. 30, 2007, of a pulmonary embolism. Spouse: Faith Steffy Buckwalter. Parents: John and Martha Denlinger Buckwalter. Children: Linda Berneman, Robert, Judith Buckwalter, Joyce Samuels, John, Leon, Mary Ann Good, Debra MacCrea, Steven, Carole Schumacher; 35 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 5 at Akron Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa.

Freyenberger, Ed, 83, Kouts, Ind., died Nov. 10, 2007. Spouse: Irene Good Freyenberger. Parents: Elmer and Ema Oswald Freyenberger. Children: Cheryl Nix, Beverly Moyer, Keith, Doug, Todd; 16 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 17 at Hopewell Mennonite Church, Kouts.

Galle, Gilbert David, 89, Moundridge, Kan., died Nov. 26, 2007. Spouse: Mourine Vogt Galle. Parents: David and Emma Toland Galle. Children: Bruce, Brent, Marcia Gitchell; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge.

Graber, Emanuel W., 83, Atlanta, Ill., Dec. 8, 2007. Spouse: Nellie Piper Graber. Parents: Peter and Marie Roth Graber. Children: Lester, Kenneth, Marvin, Ronald, Wayne, Donald, Karen Maaks, Vicki Koller; 13 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 11 at Hopedale Mennonite Church, Hopedale, Ill.

Kennel, Earl J., 93, New Holland, Pa., died Dec. 4, 2007, following a cerebrovascular event. Spouse: Ann Mae Honsaker Kennel. Parents: Joseph and Annie Mast Kennel. Children: Kathy K. Espenshade, Carol A. Ginder; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 8 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church of Atglen, Atglen, Pa.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

King, Amos Christian, 97, Westover, Md., died Nov. 27, 2007. Spouse: Martha Wert King. Agnes Ogburn King (deceased). Parents: Harry and Rosa King. Children: Elmer, Walter, Ruby Dorsey, Miriam King, Dan, Ross, Bill, A.J.; 25 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 2 at Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover, Md.

Kurtz, Martha M. Wengerd, 91, Sarasota, Fla., died Dec. 4, 2007, of pancreatic cancer. Spouse: John Kurtz (deceased). Children: Ray D., Robert L., Karen A. Berschausr, Joan F.; 10 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 8 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Lehman, Richard "Norman" N., 81, Lancaster, Pa., died Oct. 11, 2007, of pneumonia. Spouse: M. Ruth Lehman Lehman. Parents: Levi E. and Catherine Brubaker Lehman. Children: Rachel Keeler, Rebecca Zook, Ron, Rhoda Stoesz, Ruby Anderson, Robin Snyder, Rick, Raym; 13 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Memorial and celebration service: Oct. 15 at Acts Covenant Fellowship, Lancaster.

Miller, W. Orion, 86, Mt. Eaton, Ohio, died Dec. 1, 2007. Spouse: Pauline Miller (deceased). Parents: Jeremiah and Clara Miller. Children: Marty, Linda Schumacher, Roger; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 5 at Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Rheinheimer, Alfert "Al" A., 88, Middlebury, Ind., Nov. 5, 2007. Spouse: Elizabeth Schrock Rheinheimer (deceased). Parents: Clayton and Maude Miller Rheinheimer. Children: Karla Furney, Alan, Lynette; four grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 10 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Sauder, Ilva Mae Short Frey, 85, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 12, 2007. Spouse: Ron Frey (deceased). Spouse: Orval D. Sauder (deceased). Parents: Daniel H. and Anna Kutzli Short. Children: Carolyn Kauffman, Jeanette Gripe, Carol Nafziger, Judy Yoder, Linda Rupp, Jeff; 18 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 15 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Slaubaugh, Calvin R., 84, Sarasota, Fla., died Nov. 5, 2007. Spouse: Martha Louise Schrock Slaubaugh. Parents: Simon and Lydia Slaubaugh. Children: Elvin, Ronald, Bryan, Weldon, Kerry, Kim, Sherrill Brown, ChloAnn Stalter; 15 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 9 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Smith, Marvin Wayne, 71, Arvada, Colo., died Nov. 19, 2007, of liver cancer. Spouse: Grace Schweitzer Smith. Children: Laurie Goldman, Christie Smith; four grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 23 at Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakewood, Colo.

Troyer, Erma V. Stutzman, 88, Kalona, Iowa, died Dec. 12, 2007. Spouse: Lloyd J. Troyer. Parents: Joseph and Anna Stoltzfus Stutzman. Children: Omer, Marlene Miller, Carolyn Troyer, Loren, Clayton; nine grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 17 at Wellman Mennonite Church, Wellman, Iowa.

Yutzy, Galen R., 50, Plain City, Ohio, died Dec. 10, 2007, of cancer. Parents: Alvin R. and Amanda Kuhns Yutzy. Funeral: Dec. 13 at Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD. - MATTHEW 5:9

Goshen College's Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies program is built on decades of scholarship, a unique and nationally admired study-abroad program, a community that seeks diversity and Christ-centered core values rooted in the peace church tradition.

You might choose a major or a minor in a peace studies program, enhance another area of study wtih conflict mediation training, sign up for a semester of urban peacemaking study in Indianapolis, join the Pax or Eco-Pax student clubs and engage significant issues with guest speakers as well as your own professors and classmates.

We invite you to visit out welcoming campus to find out more – on your journey as a peacemaker.

GOSHEN COLLEGE

WWW.GOSHEN.EDU/PEACE

Eastern Mennonite University invites applications for three faculty openings beginning fall 2008.

Digital media: Full-time, continuing ***faculty position in digital media and design***. M.F.A. required. M.A. with related Ph.D. considered. EMU is searching for a candidate with strong background in digital media and design to teach entry-level through advanced digital media courses within four majors: art, communication, digital media and photography. Familiarity with at least several of the following is required: digital media, new media, graphic design, video production, Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, InDesign, Final Cut.

English: Full-time, continuing ***faculty position in English***. Ph.D. in English required, with expertise in American literature. Writing expertise desired in designing and teaching writing intensive courses within the major and across the curriculum.

Music: Full-time continuing ***faculty position in piano and music theory***. Doctorate preferred, master's degree required. Performance experience expected. Responsibilities include teaching private piano at university level and possibly in preparatory program and teaching all levels of music theory.

Responsibilities for each position also include student advising, university service and ongoing scholarship. Salary and rank determined by education and experience. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist/Mennonite Christian faith practices. Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Marie S. Morris, Vice President and Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, or email ugdean@emu.edu. Visit www.emu.edu online. Application review begins immediately. EMU reserves the right to fill the positions at any time or keep the positions open. We seek applicants who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity.

Local people serving the insurance needs of Mennonites and Brethren in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

For information about home, auto, farm, church, or business insurance find a Goodville agent near you at goodville.com or 1-800-448-4622.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Director of music: **North Goshen Mennonite Church**, a bicultural Hispanic-Anglo congregation in Goshen, Ind., is seeking a qualified person for .15 FTE position leading worship music: congregational singing and instrumental/vocal groups. Pay commensurate with experience and education. Contact LuAnn Steury, search chair, 574-831-4905.

Philhaven, a Mennonite-affiliated and JCAHO accredited provider of behavioral health-care services near Lancaster, Pa., seeks a ***CEO*** to lead its $50MM/1,000 employee organization. Serving over 21,000 residents annually from 20 locations, its broad continuum of care includes such services as 91 inpatient beds, a program serving the homeless in downtown Lancaster and a residential program for members of the Plain Community. Preferred candidates will have a master's degree and 10 years of senior leadership experience in the health and human services field. Interested candidates should submit inquiries to Kirk Stiffney with MHS Alliance at kirkstiffney@msn.com or 574-320-8286.

Wanted: quantities (used) of ***The Church Hymnal***, ***The Mennonite Hymnal*** and ***Zions Praises***. 540-867-9589.

Salem Mennonite Church, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alta. (45 minutes southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0; fax 780-662-0106; email cgfen@telus.net.

Goshen College invites applications for a full-time position as ***director of entrepreneurship*** in the business department, to begin in August 2008. This position will involve a one-half to three-quarters-time administrative role leading Goshen College's innovative entrepreneurship program. Some teaching included, depending on the applicant's areas of expertise. MBA or other business-related degree required, along with applicable experience or a demonstrated commitment to professional business and entrepreneurial programs. Review of applications begins on Dec. 1, 2007, and will continue until the position is successfully filled. To apply, visit the www.goshen.edu/employment Web page. Goshen College is an AA/EEO employer committed to an increasingly diverse student body and faculty.

Central District Conference (CDC), a conference of Mennonite Church USA, is searching for a ***full-time conference minister***. The conference minister will provide spiritual leadership to CDC, its congregations and pastors; provide for supportive relationships for CDC pastors; communicate and articulate the vision of CDC; call, equip and support leaders to carry out the vision of CDC; facilitate communication with congregations and serve as a representative of CDC to other MC USA conferences and the denomination. For further information about CDC: www.centraldistrict.mennonite.net/. For further information about the conference minister position, contact Robert Ramseyer at ramseyer@wcoil.com. Applications received until Jan. 15, 2008.

A book called "**rafiki: Letters to Omar**" by Joseph C. Shenk (deceased) available at xlibris on their Web site, www.exlibris.com/rfiki.html. ISBN 1-4257-7171-8. Cost $20 plus shipping. A book of personal reflections on life in East Africa while mission was becoming national church.

Mennonite Disaster Service is currently seeking applications for the full-time, salaried position of ***communications coordinator***. Applicants will fully embrace Anabaptist faith and peace positions and be willing to serve in the Akron, Pa., office. All backgrounds and ethnic cultures are encouraged to apply. Primary responsibilities of the position are to write, coordinate, develop and distribute communications and public relations materials using appropriate tools and equipment and to assist the director of communication in the coordination and production of MDS print, electronic media and other promotional products. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. A full position description may be obtained by contacting MDS directly at hr@mds.mennonite.net.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.20 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

'I'm getting married in the morning'

Sara Wenger Shenk is an author and serves as associate dean and associate professor of Christian practices at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

Must be the time of life, but it seems I'm hearing about, participating in or officiating at weddings every time I turn around: weddings in my family; weddings of colleagues' children, church friends, cousin's children; weddings of seminary students, of widowed friends. When I stop to think about it, I can tick off 20 recent or upcoming weddings I'm aware of. And from what I know about many of them, I'm struck both by their taken-for-granted sameness and by the way each is intriguingly unique.

As a lay ethnographer who loves to watch what people do, I wish I could listen in on the private conversations that eventuate in these public events. What is it that couples say to each other about why they want this or that to be part of their wedding? What are their conversations with parents about money, venue, food and who is invited? Who gets the "upper hand" in determining style and scale of the production? How prominent is the role of the pastor or officiant?

Weddings as main-stage productions have taken on a life of their own.

I'd love to listen in on these conversations to see what values inform the decisions made, who's calling the shots and why, what purposes are being served, who will be impressed and for what reasons?

I've observed as I watch and hear about weddings that there often seems to be a script behind them, a script that turns many of them into a main-stage drama, complete with costumes, lights, stage props, sound effects, memorized lines, a photographer (director) that stages every angle—and a cast party. I wish we'd reflect more as families and churches on who is writing that script and why.

Some couples are marvelously creative with the script. I love it that weddings provide an opportunity for a couple (and, more or less, a family) to say to the public who they are and what matters to them. It is like an enacted story, a drama. It is a splendid moment to tell the gathered community: This is who we are and this is what we love, complete with pageantry, beauty, solemnity, food, song and sometimes dance. While the script may define certain features of the wedding, not all couples are unreflectively manipulated by it. Rather, they've examined each feature to see whether or not it authentically enacts the drama of their unique life together.

I wonder of late whether we've gotten carried away with the pageantry. Weddings have turned into such major productions that people I talk to sometimes seem daunted by them, not sure they're up to managing such a major display. Rather than a simple celebration of a man and woman's covenant to each other before God and the community, weddings as main-stage productions have taken on a life of their own—for better or worse; for richer or poorer.

I'm reminded of our wedding, some 32 years ago. Our young adult friends now call it a "hippie wedding." It was outdoors, under a huge spreading elm tree in my parents' backyard. My sister-in-law made my dress, on which I embroidered colorful flowers. I wore a garland of flowers in my waist-long hair. Gerald wore a purple vest I had made. There were no fancy attendants, no paid musicians, no official pastor. We asked Gerald's cousin to get only action shots. We didn't want any posed photographs, since they often seem to become more important than the ceremony itself.

We picked day lilies that morning to use in baskets. We served coffee and donuts as people arrived. We welcomed the 100 or so gathered friends and family. Both sets of parents spoke on Scripture and love. We told the story of our relationship and spoke the vows we'd written to each other. There was singing, complete with my dad's harmonica accompaniment. We invited folks from the audience to provide us with encouragement and counsel, which they did. We had a picnic afterward, served by women from the local firehall. We enjoyed pastries baked by friends instead of a wedding cake. Afterward, Gerald's great aunt asked, "When were they married?" There had been no "I pronounce you husband and wife."

A friend commented that it taught him the real meaning of church. Another said it was the most worshipful experience he'd had for some time. Another said, with tears, "It was so beautiful, so beautiful." People thanked us for daring to be different and creative.

A couple months ago my dad said that when going through some old records he came across a page that detailed the expenses of our wedding on July 5, 1975. Want to guess what they were? he asked. He wrote: "My records note that the wedding costs for Sara and Gerald's wedding were $337.97. I can itemize if you wish. The largest expense was Auxiliary Ladies $107. Sugar was the smallest at $2.78. Amazing, isn't it?" TM

RESOURCES

Mennonite Perspectives on Pastoral Counseling, edited by Daniel S. Schipani (Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2007, $18), focuses on the congregation as the locus for pastoral counseling. The writers make a case for pastoral counseling as a ministry of the church.

Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues by Robert C. Roberts (Eerdmans, 2007, $18) develops an understanding of human emotions in relation to spirituality and as a basic part of Christian moral character. The study culminates with an examination of six "fruit of the Holy Spirit" emotion-virtues: contrition, joy, gratitude, hope, peace and compassion.

Neglected Voices: Peace in the Old Testament by David A. Leiter (Herald Press, 2007, $16.99) deconstructs the Bible's reputation for being about violence in the Old Testament and peace in the New Testament and explores passages in which God calls for the making of peace.

Freely You Have Received, Freely Give (Faith & Life Resources, 2007, $8.29) is a 13-session Bible study prepared by Mennonite Women that calls participants to appreciate the full range of God's goodness to us.

Wrestling with God: Devotional Readings for Men (Faith & Life Resources, 2007, $8.29), for individuals or groups, includes 52 brief devotionals based on the biblical stories of men. Each includes suggestions for reflection, discussion or activity.

The Moral Measure of the Economy by Chuck Collins and Mary Wright (Orbis Books, 2007, $18) serves as a primer of Catholic social teaching applied to economic life and moves from examining root causes to exploring real alternatives.

Mending a Torn World: Women in Interreligious Dialogue by Maura O'Neill (Orbis Books, 2007, $20) explores the main obstacles and concerns of interreligious dialogue among women in five major religions.

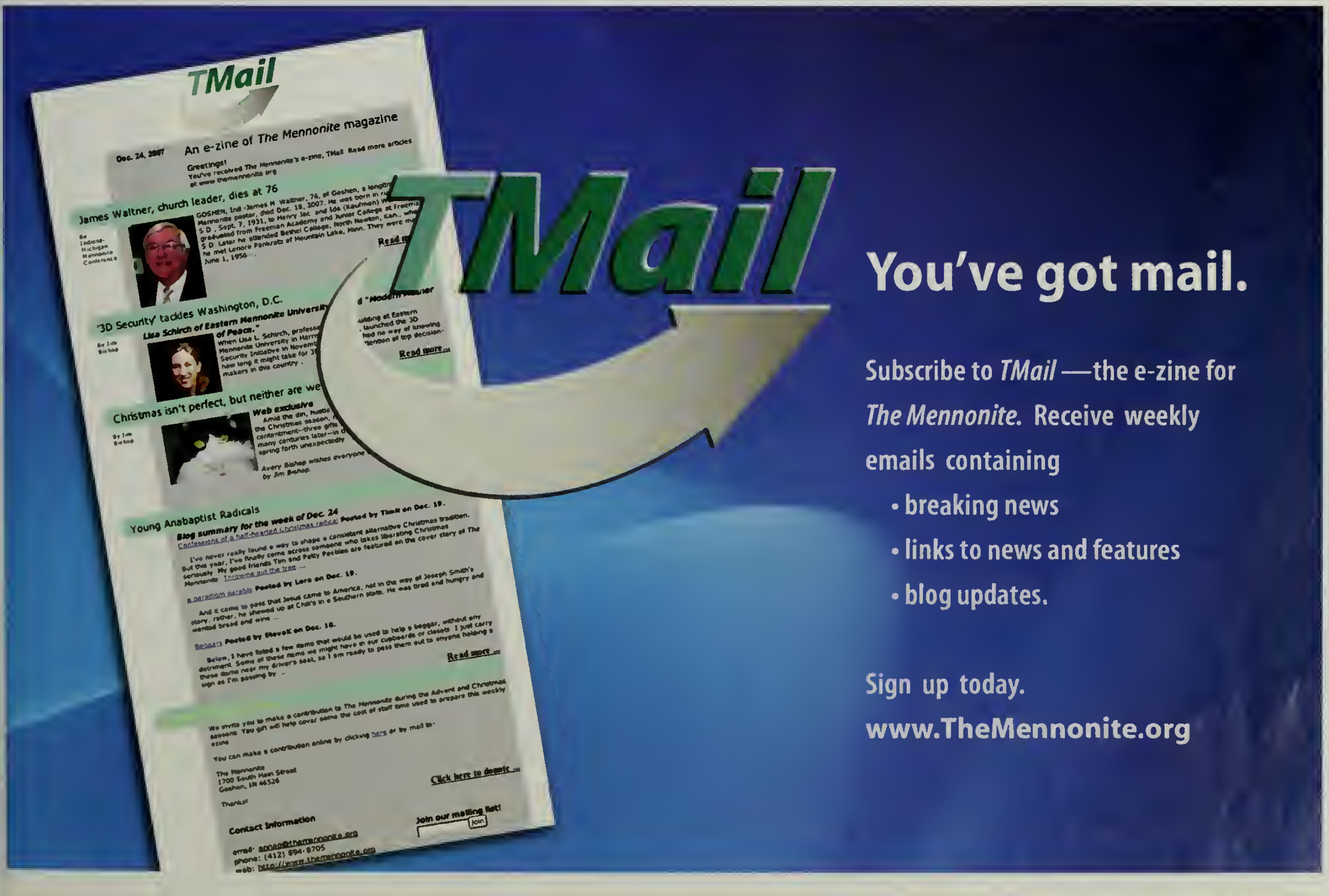
Women in Mission: From the New Testament to Today by Susan E. Smith (Orbis Books, 2007, $25) offers a comprehensive history of mission that highlights the critical contributions of women and the theological developments that influenced their role.

Under Vine and Fig Tree: Biblical Theologies of Land and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict, edited by Alain Epp Weaver (Cascadia Publishing House and Herald Press, 2007, $19.95) includes discussion questions and suggestions for action and advocacy along with maps, a chronology of the conflict and a list of resources for further learning about how the Bible relates to current events in the Middle East.

What Is Palestine-Israel? Answers to Common Questions by Sonia K. Weaver (Cascadia Publishing House and Herald Press, 2007, $9.99) presents some of the questions Mennonite workers in Palestine regularly receive from supporters in Canada, the United States and beyond, along with straightforward answers.

Upstairs the Peasants Are Revolting: More Family Life in a Farmhouse by Dorcas Smucker (Good Books, 2007, $9.95) draws inspiration and wisdom from her rollicking life with six kids in a 95-year-old farmhouse in Oregon's Willamette Valley.

House Calls and Hitching Posts: Stories from Dr. Elton Lehman's Career Among the Amish as told to Dorcas Sharp Hoover (Good Books, 2007, $29.95) is an audiobook that includes humorous and tragic true-life stories from the career of this 1998 Country Doctor of the Year recipient.



You've got mail.

Subscribe to *TMail* —the e-zine for *The Mennonite.* Receive weekly emails containing

- breaking news
- links to news and features
- blog updates.

Sign up today.
www.TheMennonite.org

****************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 873 15-DEC-09 66994 35 32
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

In with the old

Like cicadas, every 17 years a chorus of reaction follows profiles of Mennonite church members: The first one emerged after the 1972 research and the second one after the 1989 profile. The latest chorus is responding to data in Church Member Profile 2006. So far, much of the reaction has focused on the lack of growth in an aging Mennonite Church USA membership.

But the 2006 data reveals that some of the "old" in us is good and should be saved.

1. Membership is declining, and our average age increases as we have fewer children.

Over the past year, new attention has been given to the aging church. Jack Suderman, general secretary for Mennonite Church Canada, first focused on the issues of an aging church for us (Leadership, March 20, 2007). Suderman described the effect of the Baby Boomer generation on congregational membership and noted that the reason for fewer young people in our church is because the Boomers have passed through the child-bearing and child-rearing age. Suderman calls on us, consequently, to consider now what it means to have a church that is older.

"We need to embrace our aging as a gift if our church is to remain active and vibrant," Suderman wrote. "If the presence of seniors is our strength for the future, then we need to affirm and build on that strength."

In with the old.

2. There is real numerical growth in racial/ethnic congregations, but we do not value it.

One part of Mennonite Church USA *is* growing: congregations comprised mainly of underrepresented racial/ethnic members.

"Racial/ethnic members are much younger on average than Anglo members and have higher fertility rates, providing a much-needed population boost to the denomination," says Conrad L. Kanagy in *Road Signs for the Journey*, the book he wrote following completion of Church Member Profile 2006.

We have been focusing on dismantling racism in the church for at least a decade now, and many area conferences have worked at nurturing congregations comprised primarily of racial/ethnic members. We have had some success; it is part of the "old" that we can embrace. Doing so, however, will mean painful changes if we are to move beyond simply assimilating people of color into our predominantly white culture.

"Unfortunately, many Anglos—that is, white—Mennonites have little awareness of the number and growth of these members," Kanagy says. "At the same time, racial/ethnic leaders and members feel alienated and outside the structures of power and relationships of the church."

The beginning steps we have taken with racial/ethnic congregations are part of the "old" we embrace, but we must acknowledge this alienation and bring new leaders and members inside the structures of power. We can save one part of the "old" while jettisoning patterns of white privilege. In with only the best of this old.

3. By fixating on Mennonite Church USA demographics, we ignore the rest of the Anabaptist family within the United States. Whom do we ignore? The theologically conservative and more traditional parts of the Mennonite and Amish tribal systems within the United States.

"The proportion of Mennonite Church USA members among other Anabaptists … is declining," Kanagy says, "a factor affected by the denomination's actual decline in membership and increases among other Anabaptist groups."

The spiritual family to which I belong includes all the constituencies whose convictions find expression through the efforts of Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Disaster Service and MMA. We need to work as hard at building relationships with these groups as we have with Pentecostals and Roman Catholics. Their more conservative theology may feel "old" for us, but it is not. These, too, are our sisters and brothers through whom God speaks. We need them.

In with that old as well.

Data from Church Member Profile 2006 gives us an honest picture of ourselves. But it reveals strengths in our denominational body that can be encouraging. Some of the "old" in us is solid and will be the foundation upon which God builds our church during the next 17 years.—*ejt*

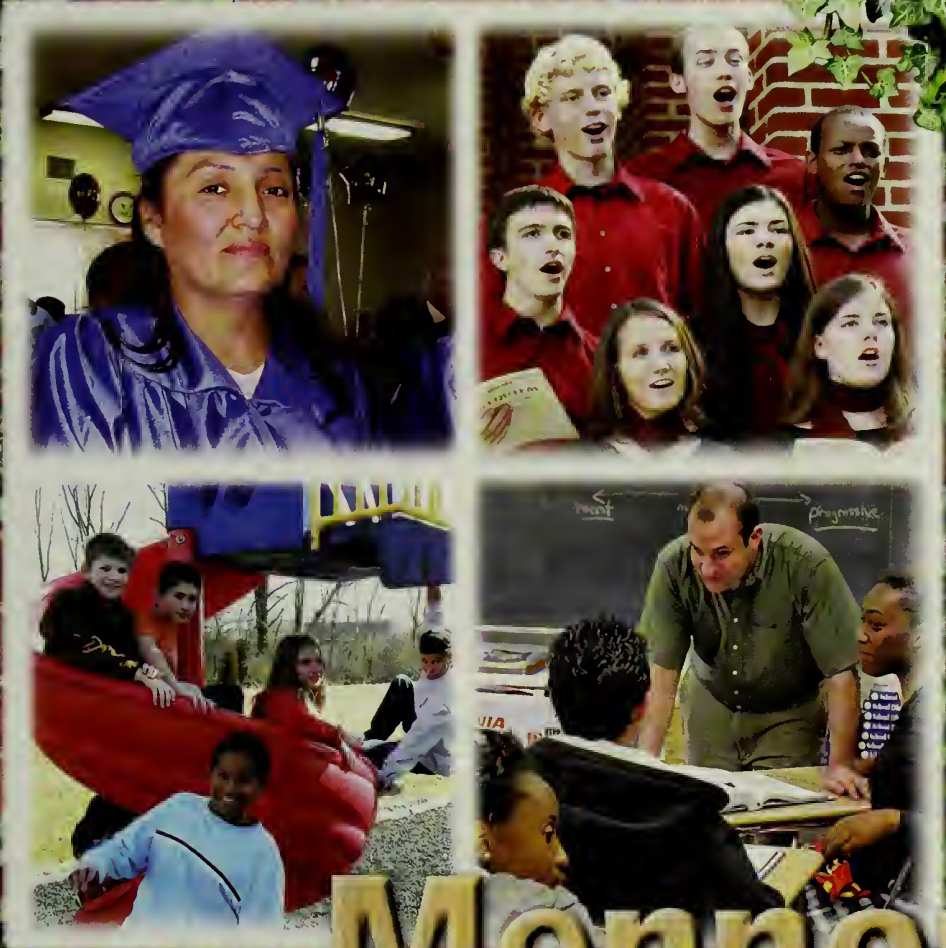
Data from the 2006 Church Member Profile reveals some strengths in our denominational body.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

TheMennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

January 22, 2008



Mennonite education

Page 8

11 Removing cost as a barrier

14 A passion for youth ministry

18 Why teach at a Mennonite school?

32 Schools, transfiguration and the Super Bowl

God's faithfulness, promises and giving

Elaine Bryant is prayer network coordinator for Illinois Mennonite Conference.

In 2007, an awe-inspiring demonstration of God's faithfulness in regard to promises was manifested in February on a Sunday afternoon at the Englewood Mennonite Church in Chicago. During a celebration of Pastor Robert Spicer's completion of one year's service—which started out with a break-in and theft from his car—the guest minister from Pastor Spicer's home church gave a sidebar to his prepared message from John 14. He broke into that message to speak about Luke 6:38: "Give and it will be given to you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom" (NKJV).

In closing remarks just before the benediction, the guest minister encouraged members from his visiting congregation to give a special donation directly to me. He started with an amount that covered what had been spent the previous week toward the congregation's needs and expenses for the celebration. His congregation's members and others present came forward to give donations—in addition to an earlier offering—that literally filled my hands and pockets.

That response was recognized by many present as a demonstrative message about God's faithfulness to the promises in the words of the Lord Jesus. In this case, the message was given in order to encourage generosity and a willingness to give sacrificially by those who have more than some, as well as those who don't have much. Space doesn't permit giving account of all of 2007's demonstrations of God's faithfulness.

I give an account of some Bible-based messages about giving and associated benefits that came to mind during and after the Sunday worship before Christmas Day. Second Corinthians 8 speaks about giving when we have an abundance or surplus for the benefit of those who have an insufficient amount to demonstrate God's equity, love and provision for and among fellow believers.

Second Corinthians 9 speaks of reaping "bountifully [with blessing]" for those "who sow bountifully." That chapter also speaks of God's love for those who give cheerfully (hilariously) and God's ability "to make all grace abound toward" those who so give, as well as those "having all sufficiency in all things and an abundance for every good work."

And there is the message given on that Sunday before Christmas, through Englewood's pastor, on John 3:16, that links giving with God's love for humankind.

God gave the Son, because of love and the desire for humankind to have everlasting life. The Son came and gave his life because of love for his Heavenly Father and humankind and so that the comforting, helping Spirit of Truth could come, stay with, indwell, lead and enable human beings to love and give like the Father and the Son.

Whether you are first nation, Native Americans, descendants of Anglo-Europeans, descendants of Africans who were enslaved in the Americas or those who are part of other ethnic groups that have immigrated to the United States, on the basis of the promises of God through the Lord Jesus in Luke 6:38—for benefit of you, your church and humankind—I urge you to make 2008 a year to start, resume or continue giving hilariously—not just money but time, yourself and your talents.

I urge this because giving is a Godlike action associated with Godlike love that includes even enemies and those who despitefully use or persecute us, and in the words from a song: "You can't beat God giving / For just as sure as you are living / And the Lord is in heaven on high / The more you give, the more he gives to you."

TheMennonite

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Vol. 11, No. 2, January 22, 2008

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

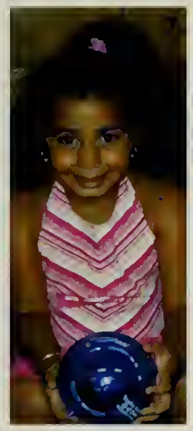
The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church USA

CONTENTS

JAN 23 '08
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN



11
MY PARENTS

8 **Integrity and faithfulness**
Mennonite higher education, part 1—*J. Daniel Hess*

11 **Removing cost as a barrier**
Mennonite higher education may be cheaper than you think. —*J. Daniel Hess*

14 **A passion for youth ministry**
Jon Heinly returns to Lancaster Mennonite School as youth minister.—*Fern Clemmer*

16 **Dear Susan**
A reflection on faith and education—*Matt Friesen*

19 **Church schools have great fiscal years**
Lilly grant boosts Goshen (Ind.) College endowment by nearly $25 million.—*Everett J. Thomas*

20 **Kenyan church leaders face refugee crisis**

21 **Volunteer is 'keeper' of refugee stories**

22 **Husband releases wife's final peace book**

24 **Of cats, sacraments and 'pagan' flags**

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Grace and truth**
God's faithfulness, promises and giving—*Elaine Bryant*

4 **Readers say**

6 **News digest**

18 **Leadership**
Why teach at a Mennonite school?—*Carlos Romero*

25 **For the record**

30 **Mediaculture**
Watch for worldviews—*Gordon Houser*

32 **Editorial**
Schools, transfiguration and the Super Bowl—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Photos provided by Mennonite Education Agency

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Baptism powerful group experience

Having spent the night in the county jail as a correctional health nurse, I'm trying to grasp the depth of several reflections on being Mennonite and baptism practices (Jan. 8 issue). Messed up circadian rhythms aren't my only challenge; other contexts and cultures that have formed me also debate within me.

As a prison chaplain in Paraguay, I had the privilege of baptizing scores of men for whom the symbol of dying to a past life—as represented by their baptism—became a power for the individual as well as a corporate (body) statement. On the one hand, baptism by immersion spoke of a man, whose life was destructive to both self and society, dying and being rebirthed. On the other, it spoke of the family into which he was now born; commitments were made by both.

From that experience of baptism, it seems to me that Karl Landis' call for "life-changing obedience" might well find an expression in discovering anew what powerful symbols are present in baptism of adults into a mutually committed community of faith. Being vulnerable with each other about areas of our lives that need to be given the death sentence, and affirming our newness of life, helps us find a balance between independence and the interdependent body of Christ.—*Jonathan Beachy, San Antonio, Texas*

Water on infants is not baptism

I was surprised to see an article focusing on the term "rebaptism" in the Jan. 8 issue ("Mennonite but Not Anabaptist").

"Anabaptist," from the Latin root for "baptize again" or "rebaptize," was the pejorative name their enemies gave to our forebears in Europe. Actually, our forefathers and foremothers—and many who have followed since—have not thought they were rebaptizing anyone. They simply did not regard water poured on the head of a kicking and screaming infant (or any infant too young to know what was happening) as baptism at all. Our German-speaking brothers and sisters do not call themselves "Wiedertäufer" ("rebaptizers"), but "Täufer" ("baptizers"). Our forebears and their followers have baptized on confession of faith in an attempt to implement the Great Commission, with its call to baptize and teach.

In the Reformation and since, not all who have called themselves Christian have agreed. We must listen to others who have called themselves Christian who have thought there were times when Christians should engage in military destruction and killing—but that does not mean we think they are right. The fact that many who have called themselves Christian think that rites involving water poured on candidates too young and weak to object are a kind of baptism does not mean we think our forebears were wrong and that their enemies were right. And the fact that some enemies of our forebears called our ancestors "rebaptizers" does not mean that what we and our Confession of Faith call "baptism" can or should be called "rebaptism."—*Albert J. Meyer, Goshen, Ind.*

Majority requires rebaptism

In response to Chad Mason's essay "Mennonite but Not Anabaptist" (Jan. 8), in which he argues against the practice of rebaptism, the author notes that he is "not aware of any Mennonites today who would require rebaptism for Christians of other communions to join their congregations."

In fact, the recent Mennonite Member Profile 2006 showed that 57 percent of members and 55 percent of pastors believe that rebaptism should be required for someone who was baptized as a baby. These data suggest that Mennonites in the United States (at least within Mennonite Church USA) remain committed to the practice of rebaptism for new members who were baptized in other Christian communions as infants.—*Conrad L. Kanagy, Elizabethtown, Pa.*

Changing Holy Spirit's gender

In the Old Testament, pronouns referring to the Spirit ("ruah") are feminine. In the New Testament, pronouns referring to the Holy Spirit ("pneuma") are neuter. Making the Holy Spirit male, as Karl Landis does in his otherwise incisive and helpful "Free to Be Different" (Jan. 8), has wide implications.—*Muriel T. Stackley, Kansas City, Kan.*

IN THIS ISSUE

Mennonite Church USA bylaws establish three purposes for *The Mennonite*. One of these is to "promote the ministries of and support the identity-building of Mennonite Church USA." There are numerous ways we do this in each issue. But our annual Church Education Sunday edition is the most ambitious. Again this year we worked with Mennonite Education Agency to provide features dealing with Mennonite education (pages 8-17). This is an important focus; church school education is the single largest initiative in our denomination. Last year Mennonite Church USA colleges, universities and seminaries had expenses of $108,066,087—and this does not include the millions spent each year by elementary and secondary schools (page 19). We also note that on Feb. 3, Church Education Sunday falls on the same day as Transfiguration Sunday and the Super Bowl (page 32).—*Editor*

Build reservoirs now

Thank you for the article "All Our Hopes and Fears" (Dec. 18, 2007) with the sentence, "In an age of terror, we respond to God's greatest act of love by living hopefully rather than fearfully."

How do we hold on to hope when experiencing great loss and material destruction? By building reservoirs of hope now. Reservoirs are built by rejoicing in the Lord and daily acting upon our faith—leaning on God's strength to overcome our irritations and disappointments.

Psalm 16:8-9 says, "I have set the Lord continually before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory (my inner self) rejoices; my body too shall rest and confidently dwell in safety" (Amplified Version).

David Sper's poem says, "Christ did not come to shield us from the grief and pain of life/But those who have, His peace inside can thrive within the strife.—*Julia Penner, Mountain Lake, Minn.*

Civil disobedience by wise men

Mike Clymer's fine article on our hopes and fears and the wise men (All Our Hopes and Fears," Dec. 18, 2007) failed to mention—along with most commentaries on that drama—that the story ends in an act of civil disobedience. The decision of the wise men not to return by Jerusalem was in direct violation of King Herod's command, which made it a straightforward act of civil disobedience.

We need more people who can hear a dream and obey it after the civil authority has had its say. Wise men still seek him, and wise men still disobey kings. This, more than once, has been the path toward hope and faithful witness.—*John K. Stoner, Akron, Pa.*

Likes the Epiphany tradition

I enjoyed several of the articles on different family customs for Advent/Epiphany/Christmas ("New Ways to Celebrate Christmas," Dec. 18, 2007). On Jan. 5, we hosted an Epiphany dinner in our home. Our church, rather than doing Christmas banquets or anything during the busy month of December, has people sign up for small dinners hosted in homes by anyone who wants to host—or be a guest. Everyone brings a dish, so the cooking is easy. We like this Epiphany tradition.—*Melodie M. Davis, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Extend rights to the unborn

Regarding the Dec. 18, 2007, article "Group Calls for a Nonkilling Society," I hope a nonkilling society also means the nonkilling of the unborn.

Life begins at fertilization and that is when one's rights should begin. Not only must surgical abortions be forbidden, but we must oppose the discarding of human embryos in in-vitro fertilization clinics, the use of chemical products, intrauterine devices, vaccines that cause abortion early in pregnancy and embryonic stem cell research.

Claiming to be personally against abortion but not wanting to make it illegal is not an acceptable approach to this issue, since it fails to see the unborn as people with rights that everyone must respect. In the past, some people said they were personally against slavery but were not abolitionists because they did not want to impose their morality on slaveholders. People who have more respect for the consciences of those who wish to abort or enslave people than they do for the rights of people not to be aborted or enslaved are clearly not as seriously opposed to abortion or slavery as those who want these practices to be illegal.—*Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

My good bishop

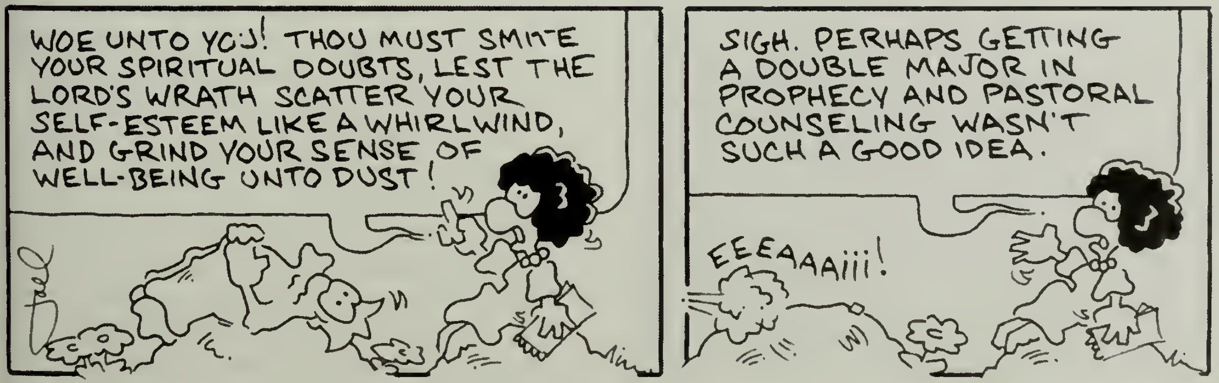
Theron Schlabach makes a good point in his Jan. 8 letter in support of recent Mennonite leaders. One person who was able to do this was the late Robert J. Baker, who wrote an appreciation for Bishop D.A. Yoder (1883-1980). His article "My Good Bishop" appeared in *Gospel Herald* Feb. 24, 1987, and was adapted for *Mennonite Encyclopedia* Vol. V, pp. 86-88.—*Daniel Hertzler,Scottdale, Pa.*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Mennonite higher education is comparable in cost with public education and worth more in quality: (84 votes)

○ Yes (56%)
○ No (32%)
○ Not sure (12%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org


WOE UNTO YOU! THOU MUST SMITE YOUR SPIRITUAL DOUBTS, LEST THE LORD'S WRATH SCATTER YOUR SELF-ESTEEM LIKE A WHIRLWIND, AND GRIND YOUR SENSE OF WELL-BEING UNTO DUST!
SIGH. PERHAPS GETTING A DOUBLE MAJOR IN PROPHECY AND PASTORAL COUNSELING WASN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA.
EEEAAAiii!

IN BRIEF

Anabaptists in the United States

By the end of 2007 there were 642,290 baptized members in Anabaptist and Anabaptist-related groups in the United States. These members were in 6,229 congregations. Pennsylvania is the number one state with 167,880 baptized members in 1,431 congregations. Ohio is second with 99,390 members in 898 congregations, and Indiana is third with 69,690 members in 625 congregations. In addition to Mennonite Church USA, groups counted in this annual report include Old Order Amish, independent Mennonite conferences and congregations, Brethren in Christ and Church of the Brethren.—*C. Nelson Hostetler*

MMA scholarships open to more

Beginning in 2008, MMA College Scholarships will be open to anyone who owns an MMA product as well as children of product owners. The product owner can be a parent, student or legal guardian of the student. The eligible products can be from MMA or our new banking partner, Mennonite Financial. The application deadline has been moved up to Feb. 28 from March 31. For details, visit www.mmaynow.com or call 800-348-7468, ext. 301. Students will be informed after May 10 if they are a scholarship recipient.—*MMA*

Anabaptism, living the gospel not different

GUATEMALA CITY, Guatemala—The 34th assembly of CAMCA (Consulta Anabautista Menonita Centroamericana) was held at the Casa Horeb Church here Nov. 28-30, 2007. Some 120 people attended, including delegates from every member conference and organization in Central America as well as people from Mennonite Church USA, Canada and the Andean and Southern Cone areas.

This followed two other events: the First Consultation of Anabaptist Hispanic Theological Institutions and the Second Gathering of Anabaptist Women Theologians of Central America.

Peter Stucky of Colombia, Mennonite World Conference Executive Committee member for Latin America, examined the assembly's theme, "The Call to Mission, Reflections and Challenges from an Anabaptist Biblical Perspective."

He described the experience of the Teusaquillo Mennonite Church in Bogotá, Colombia, where he is pastor. He said that "to live the gospel and to live Anabaptism are not two different things, but rather that Anabaptism provides a specific way of understanding what it means to follow Jesus. I do not say it is better or worse than the perspectives of other families of faith but that it is our own, that it enriches and orients us in the midst of the great tensions that we suffer in Latin America."

Stucky also spoke of the falsity of the dichotomy that is sometimes presented between being Anabaptist or Mennonite, evangelizing and spreading the gospel or working for justice and peace, or praying and seeking the gifts of the Spirit. Such dichotomies disunite us and tear apart the fabric of the Body of the Lord, he said.

In a concluding statement, delegates said they felt called by the Holy Spirit to live and proclaim a gospel that "reveals anti-kingdom values in the world and offers a liberating and integrating message inspired by the Holy Spirit." (For the full text, visit www.mwc-cmm.org).—*MWC*

Kurt Hildebrand

Respect for prisoners' rights in Haiti

Prisoners crowded into one room at the National Penitentiary in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Prisoners spoke out about overcrowding at Port-au-Prince National Penitentiary during an annual International Prisoners' Day ceremony on Oct. 28, 2007. For the past 10 years, Mennonite Central Committee has supported Haiti's prisoners through the National Network for the Defense of Human Rights, a Haitian organization that monitors the treatment of prisoners across the country.—*MCC*

Amid violence in Congo, MCC sends food

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is helping provide food to about 30,000 people who have been displaced by violence in the troubled eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Fighting between government and rebel forces has displaced hundreds of thousands of civilians in Congo's North Kivu province since last August, according to the United Nations. With financial support from MCC, relief workers are distributing a 20-day supply of beans, corn, rice, cooking oil and salt to recently displaced people in North Kivu and neighboring provinces.

Food has become scarce throughout North Kivu because farmers have fled their land, according to Kawaya Ngenda, a coordinator for the aid organization ACT International, which is carrying out the food distribution. Militants have looted and pillaged many villages, causing their residents to relocate to safer areas, Ngenda wrote in an email.—*MCC*

MMA introduces budget, debt counseling

GOSHEN, Ind.—A new budget and debt counseling program sponsored by MMA (Mennonite Mutual Aid) provides free, confidential counseling to individuals on a broad range of basic financial issues.

Effective Jan. 1, people can call toll-free 877-809-0039 to speak confidentially with a certified credit advisor about their basic money management issues. Advisors are equipped to address financial issues ranging from basic budgeting to consumer debt consolidation to bankruptcy, mortgage and credit score education, as well as advise on reorganizing finances.

The basic financial counseling service includes personal and family money management and budgeting; understanding credit reports and improving credit scores; debt repayment options, including debt management plans (fee for these plans); consumer protection and preventing/resolving identity theft; mortgage default, foreclo-

Andrew Bodden

by little ones

ana Ponce de Leon, Andrea Bodden and Andrew Joseph
den sit with the mission banks that they used to help raise
ey to support ministries in Burkina Faso. When she
ved a mission bank and a prayer card last June, 4-year-old
e de León, a member of Ebenezer Christian Church
sia Cristiana Ebenezer) in Apopka, Fla., set to work filling
e bank. She asked her parents, relatives and nearly every
or to her home to contribute to the cause. She was one of
ildren at Ebenezer Mennonite who helped collect money
ennonite Mission Network ministries in Burkina Faso. The
ren raised $277 and learned about mission workers
a and Loren Entz and their work alongside the church in
na Faso.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

sure prevention and predatory lending; home buying readiness, mortgage financing and reverse mortgages; bankruptcy consequences and alternatives; student loan issues: borrowing, repayment, default and consolidation; and vehicle loan issues: borrowing, repayment, default and repossession.

Read more about the new counseling service at www.mmaonline.org/financial_services/debt_counseling.html.—*MMA*

Documentary on aging features Mennonites

HARRISONBURG, Va.—A new Mennonite Media-produced TV documentary that examines the ups and downs of aging began airing on ABC-TV stations Jan. 6.

Embracing Aging: Families Facing Change probes the difficult passages of the later years, including the stories of the Paul and Marjorie Guengerich family of Harrisonburg, with their sons and daughters-in-law. Other Mennonites featured in the documentary include Lynn Miller, author and stewardship counselor for MMA (Mennonite Mutual Aid), and four volunteers with SOOP (Service Opportunities for Older Persons) at the International Guest House in Washington.

Residents of ElderSpirit, a cohousing community for ages 55 and up in rural Abingdon, Va., tell why they wanted to explore alternatives to typical retirement communities. The community's founder, Dene Peterson, says one of her passions is to change the way elders are treated in American society.

The documentary was produced for the "Vision and Values" series for ABC-TV by Mennonite Media in partnership with the Catholic Telecasters Group and released to ABC stations by the National Council of Churches through the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission. Local affiliates may air the documentary at their discretion.

For updates on stations airing the program check www.EmbracingAging.com, a full Web site created to complement the documentary. The program will also be available at www.store.mennomedia.org in January on DVD for $24.95 with study guide and bonus content.—*Mennonite Media*

EMU grad shows Washington insider photos

HARRISONBURG, Va.—A 2005 Eastern Mennonite University graduate now living and working in Washington is exhibiting black and white photographs at EMU this month.

Benjamin J. Myers, who earned a bachelor of science degree in art with concentration in photography, presents "Behind Closed Doors: An Insider's Look at the Nation's Capitol," through his photographs, printed on 16 x 21-inch aluminum sheets to give the images a silver finish (see below).

The Landisville, Pa., native says his exhibit "intends to portray an alternate look at the political world of Washington, D.C." He is currently living in Arlington, Va., and is a photo editor for *The Hill* newspaper, which is published four times a week for lawmakers, lobbyists and political staff members.—*EMU*

—*compiled by Gordon Houser*

Benjamin J. Meyers

Senator Barak Obama greets admirers following a Democratic National Committee forum for presidential candidates held late November 2007 in Arlington, Va.

IN BRIEF

A consumption factor of 32

Writing for *The New York Times*, Jared Diamond says: "The average rates at which people consume resources like oil and metals and produce wastes like plastics and greenhouse gases are about 32 times higher in North America, Western Europe, Japan and Australia than they are in the developing world. That factor of 32 has big consequences."
—*New York Times*

Longer work week

Joe Napsha of *The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* reports: "Americans are putting in more hours at work, about 42.5 hours [per week] in 2006, compared with about 37.5 hours in 2003, according to time-use surveys by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. The extra hours are a result of fewer employees to do work, fears of job security, a need for overtime pay and a hope for advancement, experts say."
—*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

Mother Teresa on prayer

Poet Scott Cairns in *Crux* (Winter 2006) recounts a Dan Rather interview with Mother Teresa in which he asked her what she says to God when she prays. "I don't say anything," she said. "I just listen." Rather then asked what God says to her. "He doesn't say anything," she responded. "He just listens."
—*The Christian Century*

Integrity and

George Rable

Susan Schultz Huxman

Rachel Miller Jacobs

Mennonite higher education—part 1

by J. Daniel Hess

Daniel B. Suter was once invited to teach at the University of Virginia at three times the salary that Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., paid him. But he stayed at EMU because "I believed that's where the Lord wanted me to be."

Suter later said, "I'm grateful when I think about the more than 300 physicians, dentists and other health-care workers who are serving all over the world that I helped train."

Now archived are scores of tributes to this dedicated biology professor. For example, a medical doctor wrote, "I always respected and admired his integrity, gentle spirit and his faithfulness to the Lord."

Shortly after the death of Dr. Suter, another Mennonite professor was honored. Cascadia Publishing House released a book entitled *Nurturing Spirit Through Song*. Colleagues and students created the book to honor Mary Oyer, who taught at Goshen (Ind.) College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, Ind. The editors wrote: "Mary—through her extensive knowledge of the fine arts, exacting standards, infectious leadership and generous sharing of herself—has influenced, even profoundly shaped, the lives of many people. Her creative energies have taught us to use our aesthetic senses to understand the world and our place in it. She has helped us value the experience of others in faraway places, and through her insight and excitement we have come to grasp the depth of our shared humanity."

I'm grateful when I think about the more than 300 physicians, dentists and other health-care workers who are serving all over the world that I helped train.—Daniel B. Suter

faithfulness

Intellectual growth through excellent teaching: These two examples illustrate a great regard for teachers who have devoted their careers to students in Mennonite higher education. This level of respect is not a recent development in Mennonite circles. If we had patron saints, Christopher Dock would be one of them.

Our small denomination has a junior college (Hesston [Kan.] College), two colleges (Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and Goshen [Ind.] College), two universities (Bluffton [Ohio] University and Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia) and a seminary (AMBS in Goshen). Eastern Mennonite Seminary is also integrated into EMU. As many as 500 teach in those institutions.

I interviewed a wide range of graduates of Mennonite higher education. What do they now remember, appreciate, regret and/or build upon from their experience on campus?

The most frequent response in these conversations pertained to a person, usually a professor, sometimes a staff person, who, from the vantage of years later, played a larger-than-life influence upon the individual.

George Rable: George Rable (Bluffton, 1972), a professor at the University of Alabama, where he is Charles G. Summersell Chair in Southern History, has received the prestigious Lincoln Prize and other awards for *Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg!* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

He says, "I was a nervous first-generation college student from a working-class home. I had thought about becoming a high school math teacher, but in the first semester of my sophomore year at Bluffton College I met the greatest teacher with whom I would study at any level—John D. Unruh Jr."

Knowing that Rable had studied in graduate school with the Pulitzer Prize winner T. Harry Williams, I knew his comment was significant. "[Unruh] was deeply knowledgeable about the whole range of American history."

John D. Unruh Jr. died early in his career, but he left a powerful impression. "Whatever the subject, John could convince you that he thought it was vitally important and so should you. John believed in pouring on the work—anything to make students read, think and write. But however much we students might stagger under what seemed an unimaginable work load, we could never hold that against John, whose goodness and kindness were obvious to anyone."

Susan Schultz Huxman: When Susan Schultz Huxman (Bethel, 1982) entered college, "I was ushered into a wonderful whirlwind of involvements in academics, sports, trips abroad, reader's theater and forensics."

Today Huxman's life continues to be a whirlwind of involvements with family, church, community and career. Formerly director of the Public Speaking Program at Wake Forest University, she is now director of the Elliott School of Communication at Wichita State University.

She attributes her career trajectory to two Bethel College professors—Mark Stucky, who taught speech and debate, and Ada Mae Haury, "an amazing person, a living legend." Now at 90, Ms. Haury "keeps up with me and my family."

Jim Smucker: "At first I didn't think I belonged at Goshen," says Jim Smucker (Goshen College, 1984), president of Bird-in-Hand Corporation in eastern Pennsylvania. "I wasn't academic, in the bottom half of my high school class. I didn't know why I was in college."

I was ushered into a wonderful whirlwind of involvements in academics, sports, trips abroad, reader's theater and forensics.—Susan Schultz Huxman

Economics 201 turned him on. Professor Carl Kreider ("He wore his suits so long that they went in and out of fashion three times while I was at Goshen.") devoted the final class to a discussion of faith, economics and lifestyle. "He said provocative things, and I knew he was genuine."

Later, in Senior Seminar, professor Del Good prodded each member to state a goal. "I wrote that I would get a Ph.D. by the time I was 40." Actually, Jim received his Ph.D. on May 31, prior to his 40th birthday on June 13.

Rachel Miller Jacobs: Rachel Miller Jacobs (AMBS, 2000) is pastor of faith formation at Kern Road Mennonite Church in South Bend, Ind. Her own journey through college (Goshen, 1983)—and she was an excellent student—took her to a master's degree in English at Indiana University and

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

successful classroom experience. However, with the birth of her children she concluded that she "couldn't afford to go back to teaching." For a dozen years she raised a family.

Her father's untimely death led her to grapple anew with the meaning of her own life. And at that traumatic time she watched a pastor, Duane Beck, "walking with people who needed company."

Rachel enrolled in a course at AMBS on foundations of worship and preaching. Then another class. And another—evenings and weekends, with encouragement from people at church and even a financial gift from a friend to help pay for tuition. She eventually earned an M.Div degree.

Professor Marlene Kropf said, "I think you would make an effective spiritual director." Professor Mary Schertz, "a stunning pedagogue," slowed Rachel down in Greek classes "to see what was there." Professor Gayle Gerber Koontz helped Rachel see that theology not only had a solid central trunk and academic branches but also grass roots. When Rachel participated in a Lilly Foundation-funded program called "The Engaging Pastor," she found a vocation that fit well with what Kern Road Mennonite Church was looking for.

"I could kiss every one of those faculty members," she says now, recalling her days at AMBS.

Effective teaching: The presidents of the institutions of Mennonite higher education have reaffirmed a commitment to intellectual growth of students through excellent teaching: "A comprehensive liberal arts education requires students to engage in spiritual discernment. Our academic programs feature valuable content and excellent instruction by knowledgeable and accessible faculty who are themselves committed to Christ. We call forth … intellectual gifts."

The resolve that prompts such a statement assures me that quality teaching will continue in Mennonite higher education. For this faithful service we may be grateful.

I could kiss every one of those faculty members.
—Rachel Miller Jacobs

J. Daniel Hess is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. This is the first of six articles on Mennonite higher education.

Mennonite higher education may be cheaper than you think.

by J. Daniel Hess

Note: *Because the financial procedures and protocols in our church's seminaries differ from those in the colleges and universities, they are not covered in this article.*

The presidents in Mennonite higher education have said, "We want to remove cost as a barrier for anyone who wishes to be part of our institutions." What does this statement mean when a college education seems so terribly expensive?

The cost of college: Four years on some college campuses costs well over $100,000. The announced "sticker price" for one year of tuition, room and board at Swarthmore College, an old, prestigious private college in southeastern Pennsylvania founded by the Society of Friends, is $43,542.

According to Kim Clark (*U.S. News & World Report*), after subtracting out scholarships and tax breaks, students and parents are shelling out an average of $13,727 for tuition, dorm, books and pizza at the typical public university this year.

Concerned parents are aware that the cost of college is rising faster than the cost of living. Why this exceptional escalation? Howard Keim, president of Hesston (Kan.) College, points to four factors.

First, he notes that while salaries have not risen appreciably on his campus, employee benefits and, in particular, health insurance have skyrocketed. Hesston's health insurance premiums have jumped as much as 15 percent in one year.

Second, Keim identifies technology as a significant cost factor. Ten years ago, colleges proudly showed off any "smart" classroom—one equipped to access the Internet, show videos or Power Point presentations or data bases. Today, most of Hesston's classrooms are smart. Further, technology has permeated administrative procedures—accounting, admissions, campus email and the like. In the 1980s, one person at Hesston handled such technology. Today there are four full-time employees in IT (information technology).

Third, parents and prospective students bring to campus a much higher expectation for campus buildings, athletic facilities, food and dorm rooms. Where incoming students once arrived with two suitcases, they now pull a trailer onto campus. Meeting these expectations is costly.

Fourth, for Mennonite colleges and other private institutions, the cost is increased to cover many of the expenses that are met in public institutions by federal and state sources.

Mennonite colleges and universities: What then are presidents of Mennonite colleges and universities committing their institutions to? They are not proposing to make a Mennonite education free. Rather they are encouraging collaboration in order to build strong financial aid programs.

Today in Mennonite colleges and universities, 98.67 percent of the students receive some form of financial aid—grants, loans and on-campus work compensation.

In Mennonite colleges and universities, 98.67 percent of the students receive some form of financial aid—grants, loans and on-campus work compensation.

Of particular concern to the presidents are families with financial need who can't possibly pay for a college education. Currently at Mennonite colleges and universities, families who demonstrate the greatest financial need have on average 89 percent of their need met.

The removal of financial barriers is not the presidents' task alone. They look for cooperation from (1) congregations, (2) donors, (3) families and (4) their own staffs.

Continued on page 12

Removing cost as a barrier

Mennonite higher education—part 2

When a congregation or area conference offers a scholarship to a member to attend a Mennonite college or university, that school will match the scholarship 1:1 for the first $1,000 and 1:4 above $1,000, up to the full tuition.

Continued from page 11

The congregation's opportunity: A financial aid package at just about any public or private college may contain dollars from one or more of the following nine sources:

1. outside scholarships,
2. institutional merit-based scholarships,
3. institutional need-based grants,
4. federal aid,
5. state aid,
6. federally backed need-based student loans,
7. federally backed non-need-based loans,
8. work study,
9. private loans.

One additional and unique source of financial aid, not included in the list above, is called the Church-College Matching Program. When a congregation or area conference offers a scholarship to a member to attend a Mennonite college or university, that Mennonite institution will match the scholarship 1:1 for the first $1,000 and 1:4 above $1,000, up to the full tuition.

This year Goshen (Ind.) College has received $913,173 in church aid, which it has matched with $549,312. "It's wonderful," says Judy Moore, director of financial aid. "It can make the difference."

An Indiana congregation gives up to $5,000 per student. An Ohio congregation now gives $7,000 per student. An Illinois congregation provides help for the full amount of tuition, counting the college/university match.

The donor's opportunity: Institutional merit-based scholarships and need-based grants come from either operating costs or endowments. Bluffton (Ohio) University, for example, offers scholarships and grants (see box), most of which are dependent upon donors:

Loren Swartzendruber, president of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., which has an extensive undergraduate program, graduate programs in four disciplines, a theological seminary and more than 10 special programs, reports an annual budget of $26 million. "Our primary financial challenge is to keep EMU affordable," he says. To accomplish that goal, he coordinates an effort to raise money for the annual University Fund, for multiple capital projects and to raise the endowment from its current $24 million level. "Every gift given us contributes in some way to affordability."

The family's opportunity: The presidents' promise of accessibility rests upon an assumption that parents and prospective students will do their part. Lawrence Matthews, director of financial aid at Bluffton, describes the "prepared" family as having met four standards.

- It has established a college savings account for each of the children.
- It has encouraged each child to be a good student, to take tough courses, including advanced placement courses.
- It has supported its congregation's Church-College Matching Program.
- It has educated its children on good and bad debt.

In one of the categories of the financial aid package—general scholarships—families and

Name	Range of award	Renewable?
Presidential Scholarship	full tuition	Yes
Tuition Equalization Scholarship Program	$11,360	Yes
Academic Distinction Scholarship	Tuition Equalization guarantee plus $1,000	Yes
Academic Honors Scholarship	Tuition Equalization guarantee plus $2,000	Yes
Bluffton Incentive Scholarship	$5,000 first year	Yes (possible addit'l $500 per year)
Leadership/Service Grant	$4,500	Yes
Minister/Missionary Family Grant	$1,000	Yes
Art Scholarship	$1,000	Yes
Music Scholarship	$1,000	Yes
Community Enrichment Scholarship Program	$3,000-full tuition	Yes
Transfer Scholarship	$5,000	Yes
Transfer Honors Scholarship	$6,000	Yes
Bluffton Opportunity Grant	up to $12,500 need-based grant	Yes

Presidents work diligently with their staffs to assure fairness and equitability in distributing need-based grants.

prospective students must carry the ball. Suzanne Bach, scholarship coordinator at the University of Nevada, Reno, says, "I think the most important thing students need to do is start searching for scholarships early, be organized and know the different deadlines required for the applications so they don't miss out on opportunities."

The staffs' opportunity: College and university staffs are partners in making education accessible and affordable

- by helping make each dollar on campus go as far as possible,
- by accepting with grace salary schedules significantly lower than the national average,
- by designing programs students can complete in four years,
- by giving personal attention to each student
- and by providing expert admissions office and financial aid office personnel.

The financial aid officers carry responsibility to compile financial aid packages. A beginning point for them is FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), a questionnaire completed by the families of prospective students, established by the federal government to determine eligibility of federal aid. States use the same data to determine state aid.

The officers then complete the financial aid package based on availability of institutional funds and the merits or needs of students.

The presidents' opportunity: The presidents of Mennonite higher education have worked closely with each other through the auspices of Mennonite Education Agency. They may be seen as the conductors of the collaboration described above.

The presidents' most important task is to promote exceptional instruction, a community of learning, opportunities for spiritual growth, cross-cultural perspectives and encouragement for the development of personal mission. In other words, an excellent education.

Presidents help select their staffs, including the admissions office and financial aid office personnel. They make a powerful impact on the campus environment, including an influence on how funds are spent. Off campus, the presidents not only carry out the diplomatic obligations of a chief executive but also spend considerable time raising funds. Finally, to the point of the promise of accessibility, presidents work diligently with their staffs to assure fairness and equitability in distributing need-based grants.

The private college challenge: As parents are well aware, the announced price of a year at college—colloquially called "the sticker price"—seems outrageously high. But there is a companion colloquialism: "Don't trust the sticker price."

For example, here are three sticker prices for tuition from the state of Kansas: Bethel College (Mennonite) $17,800; Hesston College (Mennonite) $17,140; Kansas State University (public) for in-state students $5,250 and for out-of-state students $14,336.

Doug Penner, president of the Kansas Independent College Association & Fund and former president of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., directed me to economicdiversity.org, a Web site offering "college-level data for researchers and the public." There I discovered that in the same year, Kansas State University students left college with a slightly higher college debt than students attending Bethel. "By comparing Kansas publics and Kansas privates, I make the case that our colleges serve ethnic minorities and low-income students at a rate roughly comparable, if not better, than the publics," says Penner.

What accounts for similar final college debts when public and private universities have such different sticker prices?

1. A student's choice of housing and meal plan.
2. Every student incurs other costs not shown on a sticker price, ranging from transportation, books, fraternity or sorority fees and extra-cost curricular activities to lifestyle issues, such as wardrobe, sports, electronic equipment, entertainment and hobbies. When one hears of $8,000 student credit-card balances, you know somebody is spending money.
3. Many institutions these days require five years to complete a bachelor's degree program. The extra year can drive up the ultimate cost of college by 20 to 25 percent.
4. Finally but significantly, the financial aid package.

The presidents' promise of accessibility does not erase the likelihood that many students will leave campus on graduation day with an education debt. Families may consider two helpful questions. First, what is the value of the item purchased with the loan? How does one compare a car loan of $25,000 and a loan of $25,000 that pays for excellent teaching, a community of support, spiritual growth, a cross-cultural perspective and the development of a personal mission?

As presidents and their staffs address accessibility, they hope no member of the church will turn away with the statement, "I couldn't afford it."

J. Daniel Hess is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. This is the second of six articles on Mennonite higher education.

Jon Heinly (in white dress shirt) talks with students.

A passion fo

by Fern Clemmer

When Jon Heinly was a student at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School, he knew he was interested in some kind of mission work, but he never dreamed the mission field was right under his feet. Four years after his 2003 graduation, he is back, serving as a youth minister. His main goal is to build relationships with students and provide a safe place for them to talk.

"I hope to be present to them in such a way that they know they can seek me out as challenges arise," he says. Specifically, this will mean being engaged with students in places such as the lunchroom, hallways and prayer room.

Lancaster Mennonite School (LMS) serves about 1,550 PreK-12 students at four campuses. It seeks to have a warm, ecumenical spirit, valuing students from many different denominational and cultural backgrounds and, through its seven-day high school residence hall, a mix of students from urban centers beyond Lancaster and around the world.

In his part-time position, Jon relates to high school and middle school students. In addition, he serves as youth pastor for Lancaster Mennonite Conference. In that assignment, which brings his work to full-time, he helps youth pastors and leaders network with each other. He also plans conference-wide youth events.

He received a degree in youth ministry and theology from Eastern University in St. Davids, Pa., where he served as a chaplain and resident assistant. Other post-high school experiences include several short-term missions trips, including a summer assignment with Eastern Mennonite Missions in Cuzco, Peru, and two service trips to Costa Rica. He also served as a youth pastor intern at Wesley United Methodist Church in St. Simons Island, Ga.

Jon attended LMS's Kraybill campus for grades 3-8, and the high school (Lancaster campus) all four years. He is a member of Mount Joy (Pa.) Mennonite Church and is

As a Christian school, we have the chance to do all these things from the Christian worldview and teach and model what it means to follow Christ in our lives.—Jon Heinly

Jon Heinly returns to Lancaster Mennonite School as youth minister.

married to Megan (Leaman) Heinly, LMS class of 2004.

LMS is one of 37 Mennonite Schools Council schools serving students from preschool through grade 12. There are MSC schools in 12 states and Puerto Rico and in Ontario.

In partnership with Mennonite Church USA, through its Mennonite Education Agency, MSC advances Christ-centered PreK-12 education by networking schools and equipping them to implement the vision of Anabaptist-Mennonite education.

MSC schools offer students a distinctive, nurturing educational experience that is Christ-centered, features educational excellence, provides faith-infused opportunities, takes place within a caring community and emphasizes peace and service.

MSC supports many annual events, some in conjunction with Mennonite Education Agency, to bring together students, faculty, administrators and board members to worship, learn and grow together.

youth ministry

Jon talks about his experience with and role in Mennonite PreK-12 education.

Why is your work important?

I believe having a youth minister is a great move for LMS. As humans, we crave meaningful relationships. This is becoming increasingly pronounced in the postmodern society in which youth today are growing up. These youth desire to be in relationship with someone they can trust.

Already I am finding that many students are willing to talk about the things they are facing or struggling with. Sometimes they just want to share a lesson God is teaching them.

What excites you most about LMS and Mennonite education?

Middle school, high school and college are crucial times because we decide our niche in life and society. It is possible to change later, but for the most part our life course is decided in our teens and early 20s. At LMS, the faculty and staff have the opportunity to help shape the future for these students. We can teach them how to think critically about ideas and engage in rigorous academics and extracurriculars. As a Christian school, we have the chance to do all these things from the Christian worldview and teach and model what it means to follow Christ in our lives. This means we can teach them what it means to "act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8).

What led to your having a passion for this job?

My passion for ministry developed out of a clear call of God during my time at Lancaster Mennonite. The passion to work with youth came from having many people who were influential in my own teenage years.

What are your other passions?

International missions and urban ministry and development. I find the diversity in these environments exciting and formative as I am stretched to see life from the perspective of another culture. Most of all, I am passionate about my faith in Jesus Christ. I want to know God better and grow in my ability to love others as he has loved me.

How did your Mennonite education experience influence you?

First, the teachers and administration at LMS care deeply about their students. I learned a lot through my relationships with the faculty. Second, LMS provided some significant leadership opportunities for me through Student Council and the student-led Friday Morning Bible Study. These were great places for me to experience leadership in a setting where I had significant responsibility but also faculty I could fall back on.

What teachers influenced you?

At Kraybill, Mr. Steckbeck. He made classes interesting and fun. At the high school, Myron Dietz. I was always amazed by his ability to relate to students who were so much younger and had such a different lifestyle from his. Yet I truly believe he allowed the love of Christ to transform him in such a way that it flowed out of him as he related to students.

What was the best thing about your Mennonite education experience?

Relationships. I learned a lot through my relationships with teachers both inside and outside the classroom. The friends I made as a student are also the ones still most important to me.

Fern Clemmer is communications coordinator at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite School and a member of Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster.

Dear Susan

A reflection on faith and education

by Matt Friesen

The following is not a real letter. But it could be. Susan is not a real person, but she could be. Her questions may not be our questions, but they could be.

Dear Susan,

How good it was to have received your letter! It sounds like you are off to a great start as a freshman in college.

It seems like just yesterday that you graduated from high school and we had a send-off for you at church. It also seems like just yesterday that you were babysitting Nick and Noah. They send their greetings and still ask now and then, "When is Susan coming over to play hide and seek?"

Things here in Oregon are the same as you remember. The sky is clear, the weather is warm, leaves are out, and we've only had three inches of rain this week. We're all feeling a bit spoiled.

But enough of our world. How about yours? Besides the adventures in dorm-life, late-night trips to the donut shop and cafeteria food, it sounds like classes are going well. I figured you'd love the literature class and thought you might hate calculus.

But it sounds like your biggest questions came from the Bible class you are taking. You sounded a little embarrassed to be asking them, especially being at a Mennonite school, but I hope you're not.

If I heard you right, I think you were wondering about asking questions about God. I think lots of people grow up with the idea that there is something wrong about asking questions about God—who God is, if God loves us, why God lets bad things happen or if God even exists.

I remember when I was a senior in high school I had a youth pastor at a Mennonite church who did a great job helping us through lots of tough times. But my most vivid memory of him was the time when I told him I was going to Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.). I expected he would be excited for me and the church. Instead he said, "I don't think you want to go there. I think you will lose your faith."

In hindsight I think he was afraid of the questions you are asking. He thought learning and faith couldn't go together. I couldn't disagree more.

I feel my experience at a Mennonite school made my faith stronger. It was a place where questions about faith were not only tolerated but encouraged. It was a place to learn not only about science, literature, languages but about ethics, theology and peacemaking, and it helped me wonder about what it means to be a Mennonite.

I recall the time in the Bible when Paul is accused of having been driven crazy by learning too much. Rather than deny his education, and he was far more educated than most in his day, he used his sharp mind to spread the good news of hope and healing.

I also think about how much the Christian church and the Mennonite church in particular have benefited from thoughtful leaders. Martin Luther King Jr., Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, not to mention Menno Simons, E.G. Kauffman, Harold Bender and all those who have taught and are teaching in our schools today.

My experience at a Mennonite school made my faith stronger. It was a place where questions about faith were not only tolerated but encouraged.

Not to mention the surveys that show that students who attend Mennonite schools are more likely to return to Mennonite churches than those who do not.

Are you tired of the sermon yet? It's been awhile since you've heard one of mine, so this will give you your fill for another semester.

You're probably thinking that I think education is God's perfect path to heaven. I should mention a couple of traps I hope you can avoid while in school and maybe even beyond. There are at least two pitfalls to avoid that have to do with faith and education.

First is the temptation to make knowledge our God. Jesus railed against those who thought they were "wise in their own understanding" because he recognized how quickly that can become egotistical, abusive and violent. When knowledge and education become fuel for arrogance, intelligence not only becomes dangerous but idolatrous. When we make the foolish mistake of putting our own understanding, as genuinely erudite as it may be, above the humility that is so much a part of faith, we become less wise, not more.

When knowledge and education become fuel for arrogance, intelligence not only becomes dangerous but idolatrous.

The second pitfall is that education can become dangerous when knowledge is used against people. Jesus also railed against leaders who used their education and privilege for themselves and forgot those who were not born into families who could afford, valued or whose circumstances made education possible. Some see school as little more than a means to their own wealth and career path. As a way to prove how much better they are than those who did not go to school. Instead, I think school is a great gift from God and an amazing privilege. You are a strong and wise woman, and I will continue to pray that you resist the temptation to use your education as a wall to build but instead allow your faith to remember that people are wondrous because of who they are, not what degrees they may or may not have. May you use your education to care for and serve those who do not have the same opportunity as you.

Let me reassure you that those are great questions. They are the questions wise and courageous people throughout the Bible asked. They are questions not to be avoided but welcomed as steps down a pathway of growing faith.

In fact, they are questions needed more now than ever: in the paper how reli-
gion affects the war in Iraq, what should be included in the pledge of allegiance,
whether or not the Ten Commandments should be in a courtroom. The church
nd our world need people who can think about faith.

Funny, but I guess what I'm encouraging you to do is have faith. Be patient and
rust that as you confront difficult questions about God, how the universe came to
e, how life is evolving, how to think about other religions and what the truths
re you want to live by that God will be walking with you. God will bring people
ito your life to walk with you. Epiphany moments, of God's doing, will break
irough now and then. You will find God in your midst even at school, even as
u struggle with what faith is all about.

Many blessings and much peace as you enjoy these precious days,

Pastor Matt

tt Friesen is pastor of Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church. This is adapted from a sermon preached on Jan. 11, 2004.

Why teach at a Mennonite school?

Carlos Romero is executive director of Mennonite Education Agency.

Recently I had an opportunity to speak to a group of prospective teachers who were interested in teaching in a Mennonite elementary or secondary school. I always enjoy such opportunities. They make me articulate convictions about which I am passionate. Here are just a few of the many reasons I gave:

- Mennonite schools create a culture filled with people who are committed to Christ; the interaction in this culture carries an Anabaptist perspective. It takes place in a friendly environment, where high academic standards are pursued. Students are challenged to develop their intellect as well as their spiritual.
- Teachers not only have an opportunity, but also are encouraged to combine a professional career with service to Christ and the church. The classrooms in our Mennonite schools are places where faith, learning, teaching and action intersect.
- Many teachers who have taught in Mennonite schools indicate they developed strong, significant and long-lasting relationships with other teachers. These relationships are based on a common mission and are faith-based. This is true also for the relationships teachers develop with their students and with many of their students' parents.
- Teaching is not only about a particular subject; it is also about equipping students for ministry in the church and in the world.
- Many parents are committed to the importance of the school's mission and the interaction of faith and learning.
- Teachers in a Mennonite school can freely integrate faith into a student's character.
- Teachers contribute to the missional church by establishing foundations of faith in partnership with parents and the church.
- Faith-based education? Teachers are free (and expected) to share and integrate their faith and beliefs into their teaching. Education is viewed as nurturing and developing the gifts of students. Teaching in an environment where colleagues are unified in purpose and goals is an invaluable benefit.

These reasons are valid not only for teaching in Mennonite elementary or secondary schools, but for any level of Mennonite education. They also are a strong rationale for the church to support Mennonite education and why the church should support our schools in a variety of ways. One of the most important ways to support Mennonite schools is by sending them our students.

One of the most important ways to support Mennonite schools is by sending them our students.

I realize I am biased. I am biased because I have lived this experience. My commitment and love of the church, my intentions to work hard to help fulfill the missional calling of Mennonite Church USA and my desire to share this widely in both Mennonite and non-Mennonite circles grows out of the impact Mennonite education had for me.

In today's world of quick fixes and easy answers, the mission of our institutions provides a foundation not only for the church of today but, perhaps even more important, for the church of the future. As a parent, I want to provide my children with the same experiences I had—for them to grow in educational institutions where they are taught through an Anabaptist lens, with high academic standards and rigor with Christ as the foundation, where teachers share a commitment and love for the church and where students are seen as friends.

As a church leader, I am keenly aware that Mennonite education has an impact on people's identification with the church and their financial support for the church. I am aware that the training of future leaders with an Anabaptist theological understanding and commitment is essential for a healthy church. I know that a Mennonite education even increases the likelihood that graduates will stay in the church.

Therefore, I end with a statement I have made many times: A strong church needs strong academic institutions, and strong Mennonite academic institutions need a strong church. It is not only a need for today but essential for the future strength and vitality of our denomination and our ability to succeed in our calling as God's people. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **When you can't pray**—Dan Schrock
- **Turn up the quiet**—Jan Johnson

Church schools have great fiscal years

Lilly grant boosts Goshen (Ind.) College endowment by nearly $25 million.

Higher returns in the endowment funds of Mennonite Church USA colleges, universities and seminaries helped them all end their last fiscal year, on June 30, 2007, with significant increases in assets, according to a summary released by Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) on Dec. 17, 2007.

"Market value gains were substantial for the year ending June 30, 2007," said MEA's associate director Lisa Heinz, "and account for much of the revenue/gains showing for each institution."

Heinz said that "market value gains" include realized capital gains (e.g. selling of stock), interest income and all other revenue and unrealized capital gains (fluctuations in the stock market).

The aggregate total of expenses reveals a 5 percent increase in expenses over the previous fiscal year but a 25 percent increase in total revenue and gains when compared to the aggregate for the fiscal year ending in June 2006 (see box).

"The 'investments'—actually endowment funds —are long-term assets of the institutions," Heinz said. "The endowments are set up to provide intergenerational equity over the long term while following socially responsible investing criteria so that the current income needs are in equilibrium with the income needs of future generations."

Goshen (Ind.) College saw the biggest increase, at nearly $25 million, but half that came from the Lilly Foundation for a specific new program.

"We were given a great gift," said Goshen president James Brenneman, "for the Center for Intercultural Teaching and Learning. It opens up great avenues to help make higher education accessible for Latino students in our community, who now make up 37 percent of the Goshen public school system's student population."

The other half of Goshen's increase resulted from investments.

"The endowments do fluctuate from year to year," said James Histand, Goshen's vice president for finance, "and this was one of the best we've had in six years. We love to see it on the positive side, but it's not something we rush out to spend."

Histand said that Goshen spends only 5 percent of its endowment each year, and that percentage is pegged to a 10-year "look back" average.

Mennonite Education Agency coordinates higher education efforts for Mennonite Church USA, but its programs include more than oversight of higher education. One of the schools, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., is a binational school and is also a program of Mennonite Church Canada.—*Everett Thomas*

The endowments are set up to provide intergenerational equity over the long term.

—Lisa Heinz

Mennonite Church USA Higher Education
Colleges, Universities, Seminaries and Mennonite Education Agency
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2007

Institution	Total Revenue/Gains	Total Expenses	Change in net assets
Bethel College	$13,266,428	$12,442,182	$824,246
Bluffton University	26,834,013	21,723,051	5,110,962
Eastern Mennonite University	33,145,678	27,820,236	5,325,442
Goshen College[1]	56,174,740	31,189,610	24,985,130
Hesston College	11,975,772	9,767,559	2,208,213
Associated Menn. Biblical Seminary[2]	10,001,022	4,088,558	5,912,464
Mennonite Education Agency[3]	1,166,956	1,034,891	132,065
Totals	$152,564,609	$108,066,087	

[1] Expenses include $2,286,652 effect of adoption of recognition of underfunded status of a defined benefit postretirement plan.

[2] AMBS is a program of both Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA.

[3] MEA activities include more than oversight of higher education institutions.

Source: Mennonite Education Agency

Kenyan church leaders face refugee crisis

After post-election violence, more than 300,000 people are displaced in Kenya.

Following a week of post-election violence, leaders in Kisumu, a city in the western region of Kenya, reports that hundreds are dead in Kisumu alone, and international news reports indicate more than 300,000 people have been displaced across Kenya.

Kisumu, Kenya's third largest city, has been the center of much of the violence, and many major businesses are gutted. Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) is working collaboratively with Mennonite Central Committee and Kenyan partners to provide relief in the region.

"We have released initial emergency funds to purchase food, blankets and tarps for displaced people in the Kisumu and Olepolos regions," says Clair Good, representative to Africa at EMM. "But we hope to send more aid to other regions as funds become available."

EMM requests immediate donations for emergency assistance to Kenya.

In Songhor, the Kisumu East Diocese, Mennonite bishop Clyde Agola says that more than 1,500 refugees from Kisumu region are camped at the local police station for protection. Around 700 of the refugees are children, and all are in desperate need of water, food, shelter and medicine.

The EMM Kenya Youth Evangelism Service (YES) team based in Songhor (Ben Yutzy, Melissa Eby, Monica Stoltzfus and Becky Jordan) bought all available maize and water-treatment supplies to share with the refugee leaders before departing for Nairobi on Jan. 6.

Other EMM workers in Kenya are all based in Nairobi and include Nevin and Barbara Kraybill at the Mennonite Guest House, Brent and Katrina Siegrist at Rosslyn Academy, and Mike and Cindy Brislen.

In Kisumu West, Mennonite bishop Dominic Opondo is working with 2,000 refugees. The Olepolos Mennonite Church is caring for the needs of more than 1,000 refugees in Ololulunga. Over half of them are children.

In a Jan. 7 phone call to Good, Bishop Philip Okeyo, general secretary of Kenya Mennonite Church, reported that people all over the country are in dire need of assistance. The churches are responding with their limited resources, working to supply blankets, tarps and potable water, but they do not have the financial capacity to meet the overwhelming needs. Church members are risking their lives to shelter refugees, minister to those affected by the fighting and work for peace and reconciliation.

Ibrahim and Diane Omondi, leaders of Dove Kenya and EMM advisors, report that Christians from many churches gathered at the downtown Anglican cathedral in Nairobi on Jan. 6 to repent before one another and pray for healing.

"It was a precious time, when tribal conflicts were openly acknowledged in an attitude of repentance," Omondis says. "But any lasting solution must put in place a process that will bring out the truth and emphasize repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation."

In this relief effort EMM will be collaborating with EMM partner churches from various tribes across Kenya.—*Jewel Showalter and Nita Landis of EMM*

• • *travel with a purpose* • •

Mennonite Your Way

2008 TOURS

- **Mexico's Copper Canyon** *March 27 - April 6* *—full—*
- **California Parks, Farms & Coast,** *May 12-23*
- **Alaska - Yukon Tour/Cruise** *June 12-28* *—wait list—*
- **Iceland Circle Tour** *July 8-18*
- **Maritime Provinces of Canada,** *August 12-22*
- **Peaks, Parks & Canyons** *September 17 - October 4*

(more info on website—ask for complete itineraries)

MYW Tours • Box 425 • Landisville, PA 17538 • 717/653-9288 • 800/296-1991
Email: myw1525@aol.com • web: www.mywtours.com

MENNONITE PARTNERS IN **CHINA**

There are many ways to serve - for one or two semesters, in short-term summer programs in universities and churches, and for 2 or 3-year terms with **MCC** or **Mennonite Mission Agency.**

Contact us!

Teach, Learn, & Serve in CHINA

1251 Virginia Avenue, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, 540-432-6983
mebyler@mpc.mennonite.net or mennonitepartnerschina.org

Volunteer is 'keeper' of refugee stories

Voluntary Service participant uses humor, baseball to connect to families.

Hannah Klaassen helps the refugee families that enter her door at Jewish Vocational Services and Catholic Charities navigate their new society. But not only that. Klaassen hopes that listening to their stories might help them develop a more personal connection.

It turned out that baseball, a few Kirundi words and laughter was all she needed to form a bond.

Klaassen, a Mission Network Mennonite Voluntary Service participant, is serving as a job placement specialist and assistant for many clients, including a family from Burundi with two young boys who speak only Kirundi. With the help of a 17-year-old interpreter (a recent refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo), who speaks Kinyarwanda, a language similar to Kirundi, Klaassen has helped the family negotiate the U.S. health-care and school systems, find access to transportation and accompany the boys to the park for soccer games.

Klaassen, a member of Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan., is spending her second year serving at Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) in Kansas City, Mo., and Catholic Charities in Kansas City, Kan., the only agencies involved in refugee resettlement work in Kansas City.

To spark conversation, Klaassen printed off a page of Kirundi words from the Internet and spent an evening with the family testing the words, learning the language from the oldest son and playing baseball with the two boys.

The goal of JVS is to help individuals become self-sufficient by providing transportation to health appointments and job interviews, getting children enrolled for school and providing interpreters.

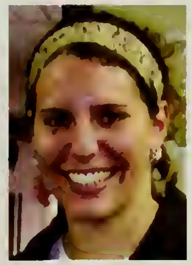
Abdul Bakar, Klaassen's supervisor and a former Somalian refugee, says for many, arriving in the United States often brings an initial sense of relief. But this bliss is often short-lived, as refugees are often faced with a barrage of barriers that limit what they can do.

"To be a refugee is to be stateless and not to have a country while still the refugee is living in a country," says Bakar. "You have a document that will not permit you to do what other people are doing because you are a refugee. You don't see it, but psychologically it has an impact."

Abdihakim Mohamed knows well the difficulties of navigating a new country and unfamiliar systems. Born in Somalia, Mohamed was 12 when civil war began. In 1991, he fled with his mother to Kenya after fighting in his hometown claimed the lives of his father and a brother and left two other brothers missing.

In April 2007, Mohamed and his mother arrived in the United States as refugees and clients of Klaassen and others at JVS. They helped Mohamed negotiate the unfamiliar systems in the United States and provided basic supplies that Mohamed and his mother would need to start a new, self-sufficient life. Mohamed now works full-time at a hotel.

These stories inspire Klaassen to continue her work. "It is so valuable to me that people are willing to share. It's moving that right now I'm sort of one keeper of their stories," she says.—*Hannah Heinzekehr of Mennonite Mission Network*



Hannah Klaassen

Mennonite Health Assembly
March 27-30, 2008 in St. Louis, Missouri

Doctors, nurses, chaplains, social workers, pastors and board/staff leaders of Anabaptist-related health and human service ministries are gathering for:

- personal, professional and spiritual renewal
- new ideas that integrate faith and work
- networking and continuing education

Join us!

Visit www.mhsonline.org
or call 800-611-4007

Contact us to be added to the mailing list.
Student scholarships available.

Sponsored by MHS Alliance and MMA in collaboration with ABHCM and the Association of Brethren Caregivers

"Communities of Healing & Hope"

beinvolved

Experts agree – it is in college that young adults…

- form their most lasting friendships,
- internalize a religious worldview,
- decide how their faith will affect their vocation.

Source: Alexander W. Astin
Higher Education Research Institute

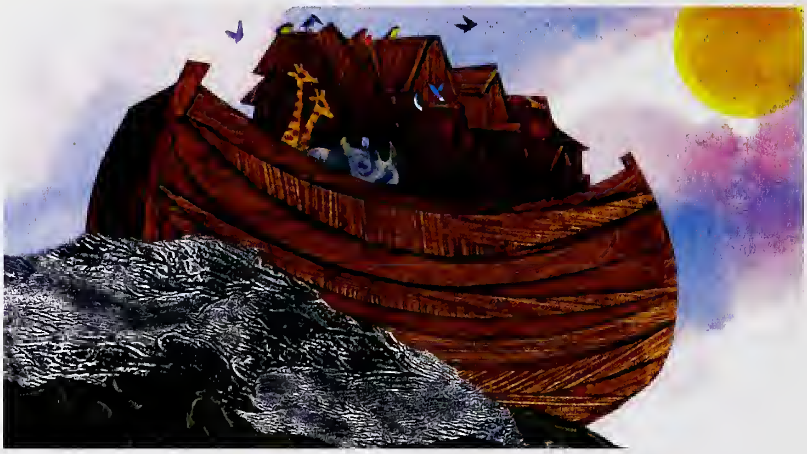
Encourage the young people in your life to attend a Mennonite college. The investment is worth it – for the people, the values, the memories.

www.emu.edu • (800) 368-2665

EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

Husband releases wife's final peace book

Ruth and Allan Eitzen finished 'Tara's Flight' before Ruth's death in April.



An illustration from *Tara's Flight* by Allan Eitzen.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Ruth Eitzen, peace advocate and author, never saw a finished copy of her children's book *Tara's Flight*, which will be released on Feb. 1 by Boyds Mills Press, Honesdale, Pa.

Ruth died of an illness in April 2007. She wrote the story about a dove of peace—a retelling of Noah and the Ark—last year, and her husband, Allan, illustrated it. Her health declined too quickly for the couple to set deadlines for the book.

"We took as long as we felt we needed," Allan says. But Ruth finished the writing months before Allan finalized the illustrations.

Allan, who now lives in Lititz, Pa., says it's bittersweet to have the book released after her death. He received his copies in November 2007 and says the book means something special to him.

Allan says Ruth was a peace advocate her entire life—from World War II to the Iraq war.

"I don't know a time when she wasn't concerned about peace," he says.

Ruth worked with children's programs in Europe with Mennonite Central Committee after World War II, before she married Allan.

Ten years ago, they spent four months in Nepal, leading workshops on writing and illustrating as well as programs at an orphanage. Ruth returned to the United States with a desire to write a new book about peace for children and had the idea of a dove, Tara, carrying a message of peace to people. Allan says he and Ruth agreed to use the story of Noah's Ark to tell a story of peace, but Ruth's idea that the dove could actually carry the message of peace was one issue he questioned. However, Ruth worked with an editor who liked the idea.

Eitzen's art

Allan likes to illustrate children's books because children's imagination provides an opportunity to "expand and use creativity," even when drawing objects like people, animals and buildings, as in *Tara's Flight*.

"Kids are surprising," he says. "Sometimes they like things you don't expect."

Allan describes his work, often with watercolors, pens, pencils and cut paper, as "stylized realism"—that is, "simplification or slight abstraction … a little exaggeration here or there to give it a personal touch."

Allan's peers often recognize his work in magazines. He says that even if one tries not to, over time, illustrators will have a style.

Allan has worked with many religious publishers in the past and says biblical characterization is "much more universal than [it] used to be." However, illustrating is often "more or less trying to adapt to the publisher's wish," he says. For example, some publishers want angels with wings and others do not.

The Eitzens also wrote and illustrated *The White Feather* (Herald Press, 1987) and *Ti Jacques: a Story of Haiti* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1972).—*Anna Groff*

Less mortgage = more ministry

Spending less on your church building could mean you have more to spend on ministry.

Get competitive mortgage rates with no points from MMA for:

- first mortgage loans,
- construction loans,* and
- refinancing.

Plus, your lenders are fellow church members. Another good example of how MMA provides stewardship solutions to the church community.

MMA's first mortgage loan rates:

5-year adjustable rate	**6.50%***
3-year adjustable rate	**6.00%***
1-year adjustable rate	**5.75%***

For a free information kit, contact the church mortgage loan department at (800) 348-7468.

MMA
Stewardship Solutions

*Rates effective Jan. 1, 2008, and are subject to change on a monthly basis. There will be a 1 percent premium on construction loans during the construction period.

Professor of peacebuilding tackles D.C.

Lisa Schirch named 'Modern Mother of Peace' after launching campaign.

When Lisa L. Schirch, professor of peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., launched the 3D Security Initiative in November 2006, she had no way of knowing how long it might take for 3D to gain the attention of top U.S. decision-makers. However, Schirch committed herself to advocating for a different approach to national security—one that doesn't rely on simply one "D" in the "3D toolkit," the tool of defense. Real security, Schirch argued, rests on a foundation of two more "D" tools: diplomacy and development.

"I felt I owed it to the students I teach, who often come from war zones in foreign countries," she says. "They'd say, 'It is great you're teaching us about peacebuilding, but what is EMU doing to change U.S. foreign policy?'"

Surprisingly, Schirch's campaign on behalf of diplomacy and development garnered attention almost immediately. Six months after 3D Security was launched, Schirch was named "Modern Mother of Peace" by the Ploughshares Foundation, one of seven women in the world to receive this recognition.

Queen Noor of Jordan, honorary chair of the "Rediscover Mothers Day" campaign, praised Schirch for her efforts to "use development projects, such as building schools and water wells, to disarm conflicts from Lebanon to Ghana."

Schirch directs the program from her base at EMU's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding in Harrisonburg, Va., while the 3D policy director is based in Washington. The 3D Security Initiative has collaborated with respected think-tanks to persuade policy makers to work with other countries to solve problems diplomatically. The Initiative also urges leaders to address the economic roots of many conflicts.

In a letter published Dec. 5, 2007, in the Congressional newspaper *The Hill*, Schirch argued for aid programs to receive more federal dollars, noting that "USAID programs in good governance, economic development, education and health care are a humanitarian imperative, but they also create an architecture that grows security from the ground up."

The tide is beginning to turn. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates is now calling for a dramatic increase in U.S. foreign aid.

Opinion-writers Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye Jr. called for "smart security" and "smart power" in a Dec. 9, 2007, article in *The Washington Post.*

"I brought three persons working in Iraq and one Afghani to Congressional offices last summer," says Schirch. "It is very unusual for Congressional officials to meet someone like Hero Anwar, a courageous woman who works for an Iraqi community development organization. She knew firsthand what it takes to prevent violence and build security, which gave her great credibility."—*Bonnie P. Lofton of EMU*

Proclamation by Design

PROCLAMATION BY DESIGN
The Visual Arts in Worship

Proclamation by Design
The Visual Arts in Worship

Pictures and stories of good visual art at work in worship, and advice on practical skills from trimming candles to setting up an art closet.
$32.99

Recommended for worship planners and artists

www.mpn.net
CAN: 1 800-631-6535 • USA: 1 800-245-7894

Faith & Life Resources
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

LCC INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT SEARCH REOPENED

LCC International University, founded in 1991, seeks a president to lead this liberal arts university effective July 2008 or earlier.

Located at Klaipeda, Lithuania, LCC is poised to become an internationally recognized center for Christian scholarship and research and the premier Christian residential university in Eastern Europe.

The Board of Directors invites nominations and applications.

Application deadline - Friday, February 22, 2008

For additional information, nomination and application instructions, please visit www.lcc.lt/newpresident.

Of cats, sacraments and 'pagan' flags

Mennonite Media presents 2007 questions to Third Way Café and answers.

Mennonite Media staff selected the top questions from 208 people who inquired to Third Way Café or Mennonite Media in 2007. Following are the top five questions (and responses) included in that list:

1. Recently several Mennonite families moved near our farm, and I have noticed that they watched our cats when they were at our house. Is there a certain Mennonite belief concerning cats?

As far as I know, no Mennonite (conservative or otherwise) groups have any beliefs concerning cats. I think it's safe to say that the more conservative groups tend to view animals less as pets and more as help around the farm, so it's possible that they just aren't used to cats as indoor pets?

2. The older I get, the more sense the Anabaptist lifestyle makes. I have recently started ordering clothes from Amish or Mennonite ladies, because they are, quite frankly, better clothes, not made in sweatshops, wear like iron and actually fit average body shapes.

After looking through Third Way Café, you might be interested in our official statement of beliefs, the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. That said, you should note that Mennonite Church USA does share your concern regarding the influence of modern culture and consumerism in our lives, but we don't withdraw from society in the same way more conservative groups do.

3. I want your definition of "sacrament." Some Mennonites think they have seven sacraments, but they cannot name them or provide me with a definition of "sacrament."

"Sacrament" is the doctrinal language of the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican/Episcopal, Lutheran, Calvinist/Reformed, Presbyterian churches. Mennonites emerged out of that European ecclesiastical scene and never have comfortably and collectively used for themselves the word "sacrament," perhaps because the term may suggest that it is a purveyor of sacred mystery that only the mysteriously sacred, qualified person can purvey.

4. Does one just go to a service or is this not done? We stopped at the Mennonite Information Center on Route 30 in Lancaster, Pa., but I was too shy to ask any questions.

It would be a bit irregular to just "pop in" at an Old Order or Amish meeting house, but most Mennonite churches welcome any and all visitors.

5. The local store run by people of the Mennonite doctrine does not sell American flags, but they do sell flags with flowers, animals and other earthly symbols, which many of us flag-flying Christians consider pagan. Why will a Mennonite-run store not sell an American flag?

Most Mennonites would not consider flags with flowers and animals on them to be pagan. Such flags aren't necessarily Christian, but most of us would say that they are simply a religion-neutral decoration that shows an appreciation for the beauty of God's creation—not a statement of belief or loyalty to a certain idea or government, unlike the American flag, which is hung as a symbol of patriotism and allegiance to the U.S. government. Most Mennonites do not fly government flags, as we do not pledge our allegiance to any worldly government or country—our allegiance is to God and the building of God's kingdom on Earth.
—Melodie Davis for Mennonite Mission Network

Find Your Space...

To Dream
We pay attention to you as a whole person, not just to one part of who you're becoming. At Bethel, you can uncover new dreams and embrace old truths.

To Worship
Be a spiritual leader on campus. Travel for mission trips. A shared sense of Christian mission and purpose enriches all of Bethel's academic and extracurricular life.

To Think and Question
You'll be challenged to excel academically, reason creatively and live with integrity. Classroom content on morality and ethics will help you develop an ethical consciousness. Bethel will empower you to think on your feet and to consider the difference between right and wrong, just and unjust.

To Discover Your World
At Bethel, we come from communities like yours and from 20 states and more than a dozen other countries. New perspectives, ideas and viewpoints join to create a campus community that reflects and respects our interconnected world.

300 East 27th Street
North Newton, KS 67117-0531
admissions@bethelks.edu
1-800-522-1887
www.bethelks.edu

Bethel College

CALENDAR

Mennonite Educators Conference (Mennonite Teachers Convention), Pittsburgh, Pa., Jan. 31-Feb. 2.

WORKERS

Aynedulu, Asbedingel, was licensed as minister of pastoral care at the Ethiopian Evangelical Church in Lancaster, Pa., on Nov. 25, 2007.

Barber, Rose Zook, was licensed as lead pastor at Eugene Mennonite Church, Eugene, Ore., on Nov. 18, 2007.

Beyer, E. Eugene, moved from lead to associate pastor at Millport Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa., on Aug. 26, 2007.

Cook, Peter C., was licensed as a missionary to Spanish council from Elizabethtown Mennonite Church, Elizabethtown, Pa., on Oct. 7, 2007.

Domorio-Neely, Frank, associate pastor of Norma Mennonite Church, Norma, N.J., resigned Aug. 14, 2007.

Glick, Del, was installed as intentional interim pastor at Mount Joy Mennonite Church, Mount Joy, Pa., on Oct. 21, 2007

Guengerich, Ron, began work as pastoral team leader at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Dec. 2, 2007.

Martin Hurst, Brenda, was installed as lead pastor at Frazer Mennonite Church, Frazer, Pa., on Oct. 22, 2007.

Martin, Gary, was installed as transition lead pastor at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Nov. 25, 2007.

Rusmisel, Dan, was installed as pastor at Community Mennonite Fellowship, Lanark, Ill., on April 22, 2007.

Showalter, Ryan M., was licensed as director of discipleship ministries at Eastern Mennonite Missions on Oct. 14. 2007. He is a member of Mount Joy Mennonite Church, Mount Joy, Pa..

Shull, Randall, was installed as lead pastor at Landisville Mennonite Church, Landisville, Pa., on Oct. 14, 2007.

Zehr, Vernon, associate pastor at Frazer Mennonite Church, Frazer, Pa., retired Oct. 20, 2007.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Abdul, Boston Gregory, Dec. 4, 2007, to David and Nicole Abdul, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Beitzel, Casey Joseph, born Feb. 20, 2006, received for adoption on Dec. 11, 2007, by Richard and Esther Maust Beitzel, Meyersdale, Pa.

Bergey, Sarah Katherine, Dec. 17, 2007, to Randy and Jodie Fox Bergey, Mohrsville, Pa.

Blauvelt, Adrienne Marie, Dec. 18, 2007, to Andy and Kim Boller Blauvelt, Wellman, Iowa.

Coblentz, Joshua Isaiah Michael Wayne, Nov. 16, 2007, to Kevin and Julia Coblentz, Uniontown, Ohio.

Elkes, Jacob Rutherford, Dec. 21, 2007, to Daniel and Sonia Ratzlaff Elkes, San Carlos, Calif.

Gingrich, Rueban Scott, Oct. 31, 2007, to Dustin and Sara Frye Gingrich, Puerto Montt, Chile.

Griffin, Elyse Louise, Dec. 26, 2007, to John W. Griffin III and Jill Unruh Griffin, Hesston, Kan.

Hurst, Chase Aiden, Dec. 16, 2007, to Chad and Coleen Rohrer Hurst, Manheim, Pa.

Kratz, Logan Matthew, Nov. 16, 2007, to Steve and Fran Kennel Kratz, Columbia, Pa.

Martin, Parker Ray, Dec. 13, 2007, to Dustin and Karen Schreck Martin, Goshen, Ind.

McDonough, Isabel Grace, Nov. 19, 2007, to Dan and Amy Penderghest McDonough, Telford, Pa.

Miller, Hudson James, Nov. 20, 2007, to Pastor Chad and June Stoltzfus Miller, Hartville, Ohio.

Myers, Jonathan Clair, Dec. 1, 2007, to John and Kim Hershey Myers, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Nyveldt, Landon Xavier, Nov. 30, 2007, to Al and Shelah Miller Nyveldt, Bainbridge, Pa.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

Bridge Club

Retirement is not a time to fold – but you can deal again.

Our free booklet, *Your enough*, can help you plan for a retirement grand slam. Call us or visit our Web site today for your copy. Make hearts trump.

(800) 348-7468, Ext. 202
www.mma-online.org

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

© 2007 Mennonite Mutual Aid

Perez, Marisa Paige, Dec. 19, 2007, to J.R. and Tiffany Baer Perez, Accident, Md.

Sims, Benjamin Eli, Oct. 19, 2007, to Jeff and Marcella Leaman Sims, Lancaster, Pa.

Stauffer, Jackson Earl, Dec. 11, 2007, to Greg and Camille Stauffer, Denver, Colo.

Stjernholm, Saralyn Marie, Dec. 11, 2007, to Rick and Angie Steiner Stjernholm, Massillon, Ohio.

Troyer, Brennan Jay Alexander, born July 10, 2006, received for adoption on Nov. 20, 2007, by Pastor Joe II and Lynn Troyer, North Canton, Ohio.

Welty, Trista Lynn, Dec. 4, 2007, to Mike and Heather Armbrister Welty, Wichita, Kan.

Yoder, Ethan Joseph, Dec. 21, 2007, to Greg and Sarah Featherston Yoder, Iowa City, Iowa.

MARRIAGES

Alger/Norris: Brandon Alger, Timberville, Va., and Marla Norris, Lowville, N.Y., Dec. 22, 2007, at Lowville Mennonite Church.

Danekas/Madsen: Natalie Danekas, Milford, Neb., and Aaron Madsen, Seward, Neb., Nov. 24, 2007, at Messiah Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Neb.

Davidhizar/Plaster: Joshua Davidhizar, Goshen, Ind., and Rebecca Plaster, Middlebury, Ind., Dec. 15, 2007, at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Edwards/Fougeron: Kwami Edwards, Brooklyn, N.Y., and Abbie Fougeron, Milford, Neb., Oct. 6, 2007, at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford.

Schlabach/Yoder: Brian Schlabach, West Liberty, Ohio, and Anna Yoder, Goshen, Ind., Dec. 22, 2007, at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen.

DEATHS

Baer, Effie Ropp, 77, North Lima, Ohio, died Dec. 20, 2007, of cancer. Spouse: Harold Baer. Parents: Lewis and Magdalena Hershberger Ropp. Children: Gareth, Arnold, Gloria Wilson, Marlene Witmer; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: North Lima Mennonite Church.

Bartel, Delsie Tieszen, 83, Marion, S.D., died Dec. 12, 2007, of cancer. Spouse: Leonhard Bartel (deceased). Parents: Isaac and Katie Tieszen. Children: Cathryn Kern, Leonhard Keith, Gerald. Funeral: Dec. 15 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Curtis, Sharon Ficke, 46, Milford, Neb., died Nov. 16, 2007, of cancer. Spouse: Tim Curtis. Parents: Wesley and Janice Bluhm Ficke. Children: Evan, Cori, Jordan. Funeral: Nov. 20 at the Milford High School Gymnasium.

Eash, Fannie Kauffman, 90, Middlebury, Ind., died Dec. 7, 2007. Spouse: Joe Eash (deceased). Parents: David D. and Katie Jantzi Kauffman. Children: Fern Knepp, Orlan, Olen, Elwin; 10 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; four step-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 10 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Engbrecht, Henry Junior, 78, Marion, S.D., died Dec. 6, 2007, of a heart attack. Spouse: Nita Huber Engbrecht. Parents: Henry and Helen Moeller Engbrecht. Funeral: Dec. 10 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Frey, Raymond E., 81, Goessel, Kan., died Nov. 17, 2007. Spouse: LuEtta Schmidt Frey. Parents: Edward H. and Augusta Neufeld Frey. Children: Marcene Entz, Melissa Beitler, Sherwin; five grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 20 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Galle, Gilbert David, 89, Moundridge, Kan., died Nov. 26, 2007. Spouse: Mourine Vogts Galle. Parents: David W. and Emma E. Toland Galle. Children: Bruce, Brent, Marcia Gitchell; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge.

Gascho, Mary "Lora" Valora Cudaback, 71, Cairo, Neb., died Dec. 12, 2007. Spouse: Chester Wayne Gascho. Parents: Jesse Earl and Della Meyers Cudaback. Children: John, Earl, Don, Dan, Rebecca Weller, Racheal Chandler, Debra Wescoat, Laurie Zimbelman; 34 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 17 at First Baptist Church, Cairo.

Hartzler, Ralph W., 89, Orrville, Ohio, died Dec. 25, 2007, following a long period of declining health. Spouse: Virginia M. Yoder Hartzler (deceased). Parents: David and Ida Kreider Hartzler. Children: Neil, Dan, Bruce, Keith, Ken; 15 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 29 at Auble Funeral Home, Orrville.

Jantze, Lola Eicher, 92, Seward, Neb., Sept. 28, 2007. Spouse: Lee Jantze (deceased). Parents: Warren and Anna Kremer Eicher. Children: Larry, Maurice, Marilyn Eberspacher, Joe, Sherry Fougeron; 13 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 1 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb.

Kaiser, William F., 73, New Middletown, Ohio, died Dec. 28, 2007. Spouse: Alfreda Kaiser. Children: Kristina Kaiser, Kara Stoner, Kyle, Addie Cox; 10 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 31 at Lane Funeral Home, Austintown, Ohio.

CAMPUS WOODS ESTATES

Call today!

BONUS ROOM
THE BIRCH
A total of 1,959 sq. ft. includes optional sun room and bonus room.

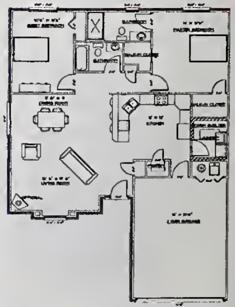
The newest residential addition to Kidron Bethel Village.

Four floor plans available. Reserve your site today.

#13 Lakewood Circle

1,470 sq. ft. Townhome
- 2-bedroom, 2-bath
- 2-car garage
- gas fireplace
- safe room

$164,500



Kidron Bethel VILLAGE
Independent Living • Assisted Living • Health Care
3001 Ivy Drive, North Newton, KS 67117
316-284-2900 • www.kidronbethel.org

Kropf, Karen Cynthia Neuschwander, 72, Canby, Ore., died Dec. 8, 2007. Spouse: Dale Kenneth Kropf (deceased). Parents: Arthur Franklin and Ruth Elizabeth Fisher Neuschwander. Children: Kenneth Eugene, Darlene Jo Anderson; four grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 15 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Lauver, Gladys M., 100, Cocolamus, Pa., died Dec. 10, 2007. Parents: Jacob M. and Emma Graybill Lauver. Funeral: Dec. 13 at Lauver Mennonite Church, Richfield, Pa.

Miller, Jean C. Hagey, 81, Phoenix, Ariz., died Dec. 18, 2007. Spouse: Earl J. Miller. Parents: Jonas G. and Katie C. Hagey. Children: Terry Lee Miller, Pamela Yothers; one grandchild. Memorial service: Dec. 30 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz., and Jan. 5 at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Schweitzer, Dolores "Jeannine" Oswald, 77, Casa Grande, Ariz., and Cairo, Neb., died Dec. 8, 2007. Spouse: Lester Schweitzer. Parents: Jacob and Mabel Hobbs Oswald. Children: Don, Ron, Jon, Alan, Sharon Jarzynka, Rebecca Boone, Jewel Faeh; 23 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 14 at First Baptist Church, Cairo.

Steiner, Mildred Esther Metzler, 94, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 29, 2007. Spouse: John S. Steiner (deceased). Parents: Harvey Allen and Edith Rickert Metzler. Children: Sylvia Miller, J., Wes, Janet Steiner, Joan Vogt; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 2 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Troyer, Lloyd John, 89, Kalona, Iowa, died Jan. 4. Spouse: Emma Stutzman Troyer (deceased). Parents: Lloyd and Emma Kennel Troyer. Children: Omer, Marlene Miller, Carolyn Troyer, Loren, Clayton; nine grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 7 at Wellman Mennonite Church, Wellman, Iowa.

Troyer, Phyllis M. Gresser, 71, Smithville, Ohio, died Dec. 24, 2007. Spouse: Willis D. Troyer. Parents: Homer and Bertha Martin Gresser. Children: Cheryl Zehr, Dan; five grandsons. Funeral: Jan. 5 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville.

Voth, Irvin Willard, 86, Newton, Kan., died Nov. 30, 2007. Spouse: Wilhelmina Koehn Voth. Parents: John F. and Helena Hildebrand Voth. Children: Sherry Voth, Allen, Arlene Voth Carter, Donald, Kenneth; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 4 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton.

Voth, Wilma Justina Unruh, 82, Peabody, Kan., died Dec. 3, 2007, of cancer. Spouse: Arnold Voth. Parents: John P. and Augusta Unruh Unruh. Children: Rodney, Annette Voth Regier, Lois Voth O'Leary, Ellen Voth; six grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Yoder, Mary L. Miller, 77, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died Dec. 18, 2007, of cancer. Spouse: Melvin R. Yoder (deceased). Parents: Levi M. and Anna Kauffman Miller. Children: Mark, Jeffrey, Sharon Erb, Diane Ley, Debra Yoder; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 21 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church, Walnut Creek, Ohio.

Zook, Mildred Marie Gingerich, 89, Kalona, Iowa, died Dec. 23, 2007. Spouse: Raymond Zook (deceased). Parents: Ben G. and Magdelene Knepp Gingerich. Children: Dorothea Moberly, Muriel Draper, Gloria Zradicka; two grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 27 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

• • travel with a purpose • •

Mennonite Your Way

CALIFORNIA
Parks • Farms • Coast
May 12-23, 2008

- Salinas Valley Farms
- Hearst Castle
- Kings Canyon & Sequoia
- Gleaners for the Hungry
- 17-mile Drive
- Spring Flowers/Blossoms
- Kent Kauffman as guide
- Central Valley Fruits
- Big Sur Coastline
- Death Valley & Yosemite
- Reedley and Mennonites
- Golden Gate Bridge
- Rosemary's Herb Garden
- Begin/end San Francisco

(URGENT - INQUIRE PROMPTLY - ITINERARY AVAILABLE)

MYW Tours • Box 425 • Landisville, PA 17538 • 717/653-9288 • 800/296-1991
Email: myw1525@aol.com • web: www.mywtours.com

Local people serving the insurance needs of Mennonites and Brethren in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

For information about home, auto, farm, church, or business insurance find a local Goodville agent at goodville.com or 1-800-448-4622.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Subscribe to
The Mennonite
Call 800-790-2498
www.TheMennonite.org

Goshen College business department faculty openings:

Assistant professor of business beginning August 2008. This full-time, tenure-track faculty position is supported by an endowed chair and provides one course release for scholarship each year. Teaching responsibilities include courses in marketing, management and other business related topics, depending upon the applicant's areas of expertise. Coordinate and direct the business internship program and serve as an advisor to business majors. Ph.D. is preferred, master's degree required in a business-related discipline. Professional experience in business is also required.

Director of entrepreneurship position to begin in August 2008. This full-time position involves both teaching and leadership of the business department's center for business and entrepreneurship education. Primary responsibilities include directing the Entrepreneurship Learning Center (ELC) and teaching from two to four courses in entrepreneurship and related business areas. Secondary responsibilities include directing the family business program and ASSETS Elkhart County, an entrepreneurship training program for business owners. Graduate degree in a business-related discipline and professional experience in business is required.

For application instructions, see position announcement at www.goshen.edu/employment Web site. Goshen College is an EEO/AA employer seeking a diverse faculty and staff.

Philadelphia Mennonite High School, a dynamic, growing, urban school, seeks applicants for the position of ***director of development***. This position is responsible for building relationships that connect individuals and groups to the mission of PMHS. Ideal candidates will be self-motivated, organized, excellent communicators with proven leadership abilities. Interested candidates should fax or email cover letter and resumé to Dr. Barbara Moses, Principal, fax: 215-769-4063, mos147@comcast.net, or bmoses@pmhsonline.org.

Mennonite Media seeks an ***accounting and office services assistant*** in the Harrisonburg, Va., office. Two-year business degree or equivalent experience in a finance office is needed. Proven computer skills, experience in Microsoft Office products, ability to learn general ledger and specific database are important. For a complete job description, visit our Web site at www.MennoniteMission.net and click on Get Involved, Staff Opportunities or call Lowell Hertzler at 540-434-6701.

***Celtic Spirituality Pilgrimage*: Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary** invites people to join the Celtic Spirituality Pilgrimage, June 14-30, led by Marlene Kropf and Willard Roth. The trip includes visits to sites in Scotland and Northern England, lectures from scholars, and retreat and daily prayer experiences in the Celtic tradition. To find out more, contact Rosemary Reschly, rreschly@ambs.edu, 574-296-6244. Available for three credit hours from AMBS; people not wishing credit are welcome.

Washington Mennonite Fellowship (WMF) seeks year-round ***camp manager*** for Camp CAMREC in the north Cascades, 12 miles from Leavenworth, Wash. Manager responsible for day-to-day operations and carrying out the camp mission including: camp business operations, camp facilities and maintenance, and coordination of WMF summer camp program. Qualifications: committed Christian embracing Anabaptist-Mennonite faith, resonant with the camp mission; strong management and maintenance skills; ability to work collaboratively with wide variety of church groups and individuals; good communication abilities; energetic motivator and self-starter. Salary and benefits negotiable. Job description available at http://camrec.mennonite.net/ or contact WMFboard@verizon.net; deadline Jan. 31 or until filled.

Serving And Learning Together

SALT

Act justly. Love mercy. Walk humbly.
Micah 6:8

SALT is a unique 11-month cross-cultural immersion experience for single, Christian young adults, 18 to 27 years old from North America. Participants need to be active and committed to personal Christian faith, discipleship and to non-violent peacemaking.

COME learn what the Lord requires of you: to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

mcc.org/salt

"I knew right off that getting Rich to understand our mission would be easy. Rich has a heart-felt connection with our work and quickly became a stakeholder in our success."

Leroy Willems, *Executive Director*
Goldensun Peace Ministries (AZ)

CONSULTING IN
Strategic Visioning
Campaign Services
Fundraising Services
Enrollment Services

ADVANCEMENT
Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

A volunteer and a resident enjoy a birthday party

Goldensun Peace Ministries (AZ)

Highland Retreat celebrates 50 years in 2008! All former staff (summer and year-round) and board members are invited to a ***reunion weekend***, June 20-22. See www.highlandretreat.org or call 540-852-3226 for details.

Hesston College seeks a ***resident director*** for women's residence hall. A student life team member, the resident director provides leadership and oversight for operation of Hesston College's women's dormitory. This resident director role is a part-time position during the school year, with summers off. The successful candidate will be a role model and mentor for students; select, train and supervise student staff and assist in enforcement of campus lifestyle standards. Qualifications include strong Christian faith, commitment to the Mennonite church and to Hesston College, leadership ability, and listening and relational skills. Bachelor's degree or higher preferred. Apply by resumé to Lamar Roth, Dean of Students, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; email lamarr@hesston.edu; or call 620-327-8235 for information. Review of applicants begins March 1 and continues until the position is filled. EOE.

Come to D.C. for the **MCC Washington Office *Spring Seminar***, March 2-4, "Uprooted Peoples: Action & Advocacy." Learn about issues facing immigrants and refugees through workshops, worship and speakers: http://www.mcc.org/us/washington or 202-544-6564

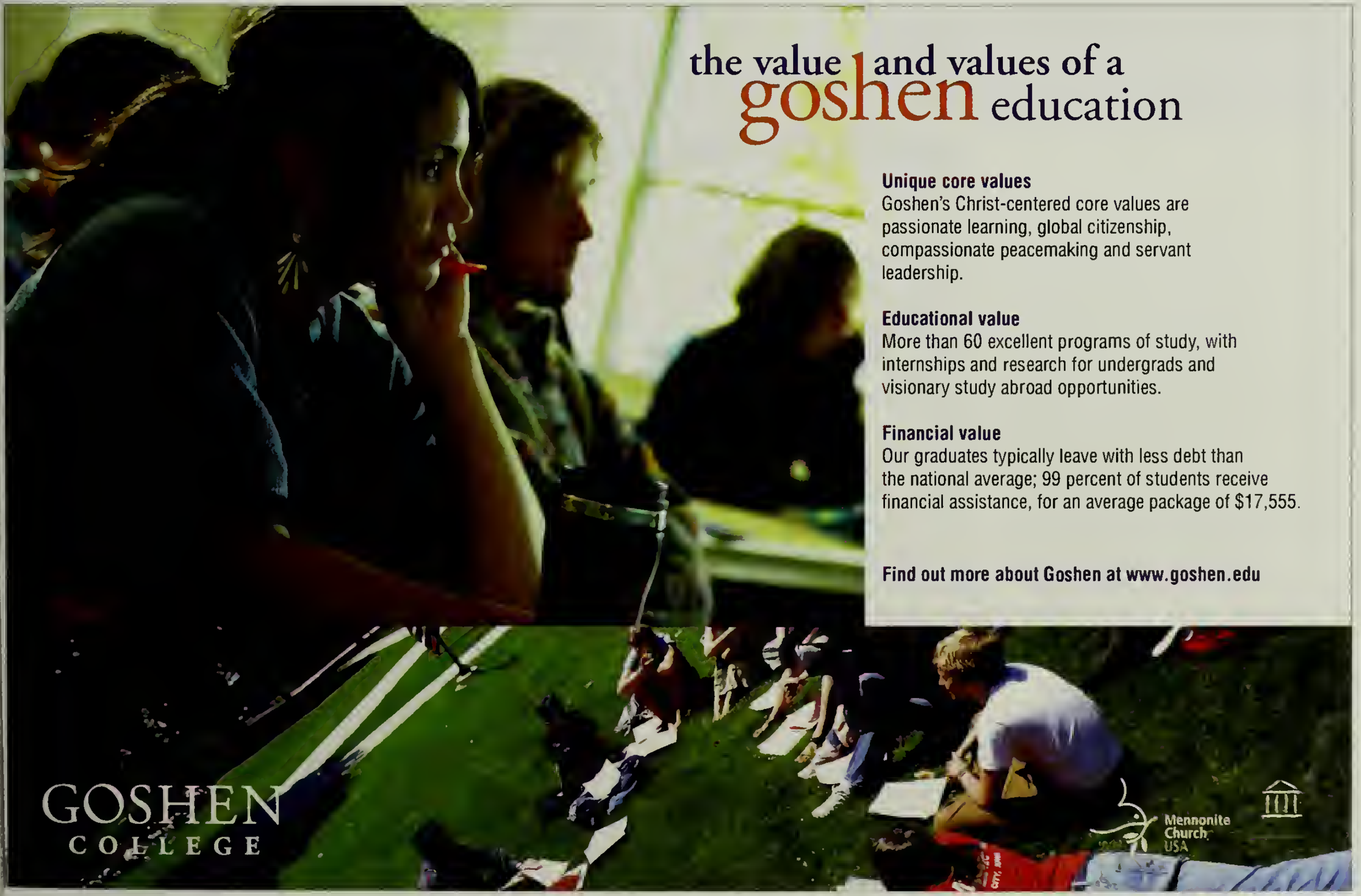
Salem Mennonite Church, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alta. (45 minutes southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0; fax 780-662-0106; email cgfen@telus.net.

Conrad Grebel University College, a residence and teaching facility affiliated with the University of Waterloo, seeks a married couple for the position of ***campus hosts*** (formerly known as senior residents), beginning approximately June 1. The role involves living in an apartment in the college's residence building and supervising the college during nonbusiness hours. Rent and utilities are free in exchange for performance of duties. Applicants should be mature, responsible and able to relate to a broad range of people, especially students in residence. If interested, contact E. Paul Penner, CGUC Operations Manager, at 519-885-0220, ext. 24231 or by email at eppenner@uwaterloo.ca. Application deadline is Feb. 15.

Bethel Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio, seeks ***pastor*** to re-energize graying congregation, full-time/part-time by vocational open options, contact pastor search committee: dlandis002@neo.com.

Philhaven, a Mennonite-affiliated and JCAHO accredited provider of behavioral health-care services near Lancaster, Pa., seeks a ***CEO*** to lead its $50MM/1,000 employee organization. Serving over 21,000 residents annually from 20 locations, its broad continuum of care includes such services as 91 inpatient beds, a program serving the homeless in downtown Lancaster and a residential program for members of the Plain Community. Preferred candidates will have a master's degree and 10 years of senior leadership experience in the health and human services field. Interested candidates should submit inquiries to Kirk Stiffney with MHS Alliance at kirkstiffney@msn.com or 574-320-8286.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.20 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.



the value and values of a goshen education

Unique core values
Goshen's Christ-centered core values are passionate learning, global citizenship, compassionate peacemaking and servant leadership.

Educational value
More than 60 excellent programs of study, with internships and research for undergrads and visionary study abroad opportunities.

Financial value
Our graduates typically leave with less debt than the national average; 99 percent of students receive financial assistance, for an average package of $17,555.

Find out more about Goshen at www.goshen.edu

GOSHEN COLLEGE

Mennonite Church USA

Watch for worldviews

Gordon Houser

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Worldview (weltanschauung): a comprehensive conception or apprehension of the world, esp. from a specific standpoint.—Webster's Dictionary

When we pay our money and spend a couple of hours in front of a movie, we enter another world and encounter a worldview that we may or—often—may not share. We should at least be aware of this interaction.

We often like movies that share our worldview, or at least we like ones that don't challenge our views too much. But the medium of film is subtle and powerful. We easily find ourselves identifying with characters we normally wouldn't like. In *The Gospel According to Hollywood* (see "Books" below), Greg Garrett points out that Alfred Hitchcock "even contrived to implicate us in the evil his villains commit."

Too often we enter the theater looking merely to be entertained and don't think about the world we're entering or even our own worldview. We end up rooting for the hero to take revenge on the bad guy, even though we confess we believe in Jesus' way of forgiveness.

Or we may simply ignore films altogether, which is fine. But for those who watch them, and there are many of us, let's at least think about this interaction of worldviews.

Art often takes us places we would not choose to go—perhaps do not want to go. For example, the film *No Country for Old Men* presents a world of evil and violence, focusing on a psychopathic killer hunting a man who took $2 million in drug money he found in the Texas desert. It's difficult to watch, partly because the filmmakers present so well the details of the terrible acts and present them so realistically, without the myth of the western, in which the good guys defeat the bad guys. The film captures the sense many of us feel, that things keep getting worse, out of hand. As the sheriff in the story says, "It all started going downhill when people stopped saying sir and madam."

This film dramatizes a stark truth, that evil exists and is not always punished. It also includes moral characters who, like most of us, want to live quiet, peaceful lives. And it ends with an image that hints at transcendence, at some meaning beyond death.

But while *No Country for Old Men* is disturbing, it is fiction. These events did not take place. On the other hand, the documentary *No End in Sight* is more disturbing, or should be, because it recounts events that did take place—the stupid decisions leading up to and implementing the war in Iraq, decisions that have cost many lives.

At the other end of the spectrum is another documentary, *Into Great Silence*, which takes viewers into a Carthusian monastery in the French Alps. Its worldview includes a life given to prayer and the worship of God. With no score, voice-over or archival footage, this mesmerizing film immerses viewers in the silence and slow pace of monastic life. No other film I saw in the last year affected me more. It not only showed me a different way of living and challenged my own fast pace but drew me into its own pace and literally slowed me down.

The art of film is judged by the way it brings together image and sound (or silence) in a form—usually a narrative—that communicates some kind of meaning. Every filmmaker presents his or her work from a particular worldview. But in well-made films, that worldview does not dominate the story being told.

Christians tend to like stories with messages, as long as they agree with the message. We often read the Bible the same way—to reinforce our own beliefs. But the Bible and good films can challenge us and help us see the world—and ourselves—in new ways, if we let them.

BOOKS

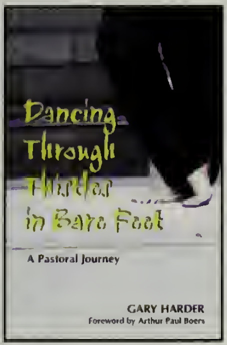
Books keep coming out on films. Here are several helpful ones : **In a New Light: Spirituality and the Media Arts** by Ron Austin (Eerdmans, 2007, $12) unpacks the spiritual principles underlying the art of film. Austin, a writer/producer in Hollywood for over 40 years, provides insights into the spiritual life and spiritual aspects of certain films and filmmakers. **The Gospel According to Hollywood** by Greg Garrett (Westminster John Knox Press, 2007, $16.95) examines how various Hollywood films can shed light on various theological themes: God's existence, the Trinity, sin and death, grace and redemption, peace and justice, the church. **Jesus, the Gospels and Cinematic Imagination: A Handbook to Jesus on DVD** by Jeffrey L. Staley and Richard Walsh (Westminster John Knox Press, 2007, $19.95) summarizes 18 popular Jesus movies and shows how they parallel the Gospel accounts. **Hearing a Film, Seeing a Sermon: Preaching and Popular Movies** by Timothy B. Cargal (Westminster John Knox Press, 2007, $19.95) teaches pastors the basics of interpreting films in order to integrate this into their sermons. All these books recognize that films are a part of many Christians' lives and need attention.

FILMS

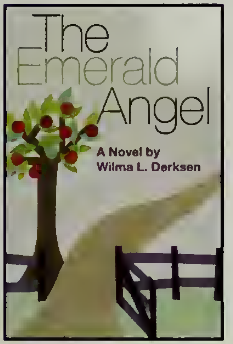
Juno (PG-13) is an offbeat comedy about a serious subject. Juno (Ellen Page) is a precocious 16-year-old who has sex with her friend Paulie and becomes pregnant. Supremely self-confident, she goes to an abortion clinic but doesn't like the clientele or the help and leaves. She decides to adopt her baby to a couple who place an ad in the *Penny Saver*. Complications ensue, and Juno must make a difficult decision. A well-acted and sharply written film, it raises questions and avoids others.

The Golden Compass (PG-13) is based on the first book of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* fantasy trilogy. The film can't match the complexity of the book and may confuse those who haven't read it. It also ends abruptly, earlier in the plot than the book. While his writing is often creative and compelling, Pullman is outspoken in his opposition to institutional religion, and his preaching gets in the way of the story, as he creates a boring, simplistic straw man in "the magisterium."

New from Herald Press


Dancing Through Thistles in Bare Feet
A Pastoral Journey
GARY HARDER
Foreword by Arthur Paul Boers

Dancing Through Thistles in Bare Feet: A Pastoral Journey
Gary Harder reflects on 42 years as a pastor. With deeply personal stories, he recalls the surprises of God's mysterious healing work. Amid the chaos of people's lives, Harder finds, God is often present in unexpected ways. Harder creates a candid and lively conversation between experience and reflection; between the biblical witness and the stark reality of conflict in the church; between crisis and opportunities for ministry.
Paper, 130 pages, $15.99



The Emerald Angel: A Novel
A mysterious path through an orchard in the Emerald Valley of British Columbia, Canada, attracts the attention of young Ava, who knows that her grandmother's house is at the end of that trail. Why do so many local people visit Ava's grandmother with their troubles and problems? As Ava watches, her grandmother blesses the visitors with her extraordinary gifts of compassion, empathy and, most of all, listening.
By **Wilma L. Derksen.**
Paper, 120 pages, $11.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"**As a Bible professor and director of peace and conflict studies at Bluffton University, I have the opportunity to emphasize and live out in the classroom the Mennonite values of close attention to scripture and nonviolent action.** I love reading the Bible with students and thinking about how Jesus' teachings ask all of his disciples to be peacemakers. It is exciting to see students take Jesus' call seriously for their own lives as they are making decisions about what sorts of people they will be in the world."

– Laura Brenneman, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion and director of peace and conflict studies

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

**************************************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 874 15-DEC-09 35 32
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Schools, transfiguration and the Super Bowl

Everett J. Thomas

Sunday, Feb. 3, will be a complicated day. On the ecumenical church calendar it is Transfiguration Sunday. Mennonite Church USA designates it Church Education Sunday. The Super Bowl is in the evening. All three events call for the same thing: witnesses.

Materials distributed by Mennonite Education Agency help congregations focus on the Transfiguration—the Matthew 17 account of Jesus' journey up a high mountain, where "his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white." His companions were Peter, James and John. When a voice from the clouds said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" the three men fell down, terrified. The moment they witnessed has remained etched in Christian history and imagination for millennia.

The worship material for congregations observing Church Education Sunday also suggests a different kind of witness: God at work through Mennonite education. It is a message that the presidents and MEA's leader offered in a letter to our readers last summer.

"We are witnesses to God at work through Mennonite higher education," they said in a letter in our June 19, 2007, issue. "We are Barry, Jim Loren, Jim, Howard, Nelson and Carlos."

Jesus was transfigured by being with God. What we witness can transfigure us as well.

These leaders were reporting on what they observe on their campuses. But such "witness" language feels new from college and university presidents. What does it mean for the schools to develop cultures of witness? There is no need to assume that students—especially college age and older—are somehow waiting to be the church. The energy young adults bring to their faith can revitalize our congregations. Stories about students who recognize and respond to God at work in the world will give new focus and encouragement for those of us struggling to understand "missional."

While many of us are still uncertain what that word means, we do understand that God is at work in the world, and it is our responsibility to first witness this work and then join in. This orientation is now part of the DNA in the 6-year-old Mennonite Church USA. For at least one veteran church leader, this way of looking at the world is new for our church schools.

"One benefit [of the GC-MC merger] is the clear embrace of missional church nomenclature in higher education's core leadership," said Sherm Kauffman, who retired last month from his role as executive director for Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, "which is now willing to … talk about the mission of God in the world."

So what does it mean to talk about the mission of God in the world on our campuses? The presidents' letter was not specific, but they did promise four things for their students: spiritual growth and a Christian worldview; intellectual growth and leadership training; a supportive, lifelong community; and affordable education.

What does this have to do with the Super Bowl? If the New England Patriots are in this year's Super Bowl (we go to press Jan. 16), the viewing audience will probably set a record for size. That is because millions of people will want to be witnesses to the first NFL perfect season that included 16 regular season games—a record that may not be matched in our lifetime.

But on Super Bowl Sunday we also observe Church Education Sunday and will be reminded about the way God is transfiguring young minds and hearts through church school education. This annual observance is a time to celebrate what we witness in this growth edge of the church.

On Church Education Sunday we will also be reminded about the scene Peter, James and John witnessed on the mountain. If we place ourselves in their shoes, we, too, will receive God's commandment when he said of Jesus, "Listen to him!"

Jesus was transfigured by being with God. What we witness can transfigure us as well. On one particular Sunday we will have an opportunity to witness to matters important in light of eternity and a football game that is not.—*ejt*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org
February 5, 2008

when you can't pray

Page 8

12 Be silent—to hear
14 Turn up the quiet
18 Reflections on baptism
32 It's not easier with age

Sacrifice and suffering

Clarence E. Rempel is a pastor at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

I was excited about visiting China for two reasons. One, to see firsthand the economic and social transformation of China from one of the poorest countries in the world to a global economic powerhouse in just 30 years. China now owns over $1 trillion of U.S. bonds. I experience this economic power of China almost every day as I watch mile-and-a-half-long trains stacked with double-decker cargo containers pass through Newton, Kan., loaded with goods from China. Eighty percent of the world's toys are now made in China.

A second, more important reason was to meet the Christians who had endured the persecutions of the Cultural Revolution and to experience the vibrancy of a growing church in China. I accompanied Sheldon Sawatzky, director for East Asia for Mennonite Mission Network of Mennonite Church USA. Rod Suderman of Mennonite Central Committee served as our in-country guide. From Beijing we traveled 200 miles south to Daming and Puyang (formerly Kaichow), the area where H.J. and Maria Brown and a host of Mennonite missionaries established schools, staffed medical clinics and planted churches in the first half of the 20th century. At great personal risk and family sacrifice H.J. and Maria raised their own support to go to what H.J. described as a place of darkness—no schools, no medical services, no churches, no knowledge of God. The people worshiped idols and were dominated by fear of the spirits.

What about today? At the former Mennonite mission compound in Daming, the church has built a three-story Christian learning center with twin steeple towers. They are using it as a Christian learning center with 71 Bible students housed on the first floor in dormitory-type rooms. We were awakened at 5:15 a.m. to loud praying and robust singing as their day of Bible training began. We were housed on the second floor across the hall from their large classroom. Our room served as dining hall, conference room and sleeping quarters. We had one pail of clean water for washing and one that served as a chamber pot.

Living conditions are simple, education limited. Building new church facilities requires sacrifice.

In 1995, they had 22 congregations. Now they have 44. In 1995, they had four church buildings. Now they have 24. In the 1990s they had 800 baptisms a year. This last year they had 400. In 1995, they had seven church leaders; today they have 65 church leaders but no pastors.

Most of the church leaders in the Daming area have only a middle-school education and limited Bible training. Nevertheless, I sensed the dedication of these church leaders, all serving on a volunteer basis. They want the church to grow.

The church in China radiates the principle that missional churches are willing to suffer and ready to sacrifice to forward God's saving mission.

The church in China suffered greatly after the Communist takeover and during the Cultural Revolution. Tens of thousands of Christians were imprisoned, starved, tortured and killed. Yet the church grew to anywhere from 30 to 100 million Christians today, depending on whose estimates you trust.

The dream of many Chinese leaders today is to send 100,000 missionaries from China down the silk trade routes back to Jerusalem. The sending of these missionaries has been underway since 2000. In the first year, 400 were sent to 10 countries. Training is not your typical seminary class. Main courses include how to suffer and die, how to witness and how to escape for the Lord. Missional churches are willing to suffer and ready to sacrifice to forward God's saving mission.

TheMennonite

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Vol. 11, No. 3, February 5, 2008

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

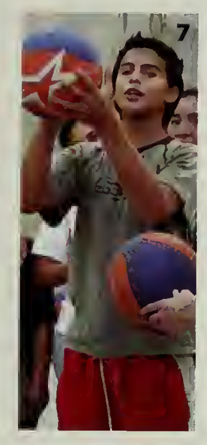
Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

FEB 4 '08


7

23

21

11

8 **When you can't pray**
The dark night is a gift of God.—*Dan Schrock*

12 **Be silent—to hear**
The Bible's 'silence' may surprise you.—*Nancy V. Lee*

14 **Turn up the quiet**
What is solitude and why try it?—*Jan Johnson*

16 **Supportive communities**
Mennonite higher education—part 3—*J. Daniel Hess*

19 **U.S. and Canadian Mennonites to meet**
Denominations to gather at binational summit July 8-10 in Winnipeg.

20 **Mission agencies discuss power, empire**
—*Anna Groff*

21 **Group to Iran encounters no hostility**

22 **Relief funds needed as Kenya crisis rises**

23 **Thief seeks scrap metal but finds faith**

24 **Dutch send medical supplies to Tanzania**

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Grace and truth**
Sacrifice and suffering—*Clarence E. Rempel*

4 **Readers say**

6 **News digest**

18 **Speaking out**
Reflections on baptism—*Spencer Bradford*

26 **For the record**

30 **Real families**
Church as family: worrying and celebrating—*Michael A. King*

32 **Editorial**
It's not easier with age—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: ©Dreamstime.com

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The liberty in baptism is not individualism

The 16th-century Anabaptists denied the authority of societal powers—in their time, the church-state—in favor of scriptural authority. It is refreshing that Chad Mason ("Mennonite but Not Anabaptist," Jan. 8) describes the rejection of infant baptism as a political action that demonstrated Anabaptist refusal to submit to worldly authority. Certainly infant baptism no longer serves as a societal "rite of entry." However, Mason does not acknowledge the theological rationale for adult baptism, which remains valid. This is the principle of liberty in baptism embraced by Anabaptists from Menno Simons to H.S. Bender. Community should remain central to Mennonites. However, a forced community, which infant baptism necessarily implies and Mason seemingly deems acceptable, is antithetical to voluntariness in Christian commitment. It is an error to confuse baptismal liberty with individualism.

Furthermore, merely identifying that infant baptism is no longer a "rite of entry" ignores the possibility of a modern equivalent of this rite. How should Mennonites reject the authority of our own human hierarchies? Has the dominant (Christian) culture become so much the kingdom of God that we are now ready to embrace it? The Mennonite church has largely replaced radical Anabaptist values with Mennonite culturalism as what makes us distinctive. Rather than become increasingly cozy with mainstream culture and mainstream Christianity, our denomination should look for new ways to reject the kingdom of this world. A withdrawal from voluntariness in Christian commitment is no remedy.—*Patrick N. Weybright, Lancaster, Pa.*

IN THIS ISSUE

The season of Lent begins on Feb. 6—Ash Wednesday. The articles in this issue can be a resource to those who observe the Lenten season as well as those who do not. Dan Schrock's article (page 8) examines the "dark night of the soul" experienced by Mother Teresa and says, "During the dark night, God reduces our interest in meditation in order to increase our interest in contemplation." Jan Johnson (page 14) suggests that we should "turn up the quiet" through solitude. "Solitude is a place of hearing God and letting go of all that is not God," Johnson says. "Out of this transformed self, real ministry flows." News in this issue includes the announcement of a "summit" of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA members (page 19), a secular news story about Mennonite Central Committee's recent delegation to Iran (page 21) and the second ordination of a woman in Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference (page 6).—*Editor*

Pastors still ask for rebaptism

Regarding "Mennonite but Not Anabaptist": For the believers' church, baptism was "believer's baptism" as evident in the first baptismal service in Zurich and again the next day of George Schad in Zollikon and so on. For the early Swiss Brethren and later with Menno Simons, the primary concern was in being a new creature in Christ, a believer, a disciple in commitment, and baptism was a sign of this covenant. Similarly it is only a "sign" of cleansing from sin, not a sacramental cleansing. Yes, a textual literalism means a second baptism, and in Mennonite churches "believer's" baptism is not a second one but is still true to the Anabaptist vision of a meaningful faith covenant.

But there are congregations and a good number of us pastors who, in welcoming people of other backgrounds in faith, still ask of them the considerations of rebaptism for membership. I have had the privilege numerous times of this covenant experience in the church in Washington. We did not see this as individualism, as a private matter, but as sharing in the covenant community.

I also have a problem with our reading the Anabaptist position as primarily challenging political identification. While this identification was the character of the state/church, I find no evidence that the Swiss Brethren saw this as the meaning for their move to believer's baptism.—*Myron S. Augsburger, Washington*

Don't water down martyr-tested tradition

Chad Mason's argument that we "end cannibalism in Mennonite churches" was convoluted to say the least ("Mennonite but Not Anabaptist"). What would he have us change first, our Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective or the Bible?

I applaud Mason in his ecumenical quest to bring the body of Christ closer together, but I fail to see how public baptism made on a person's confession of Christ to those who were baptized—on the less-than-biblical infant baptism—is being rude to Catholics. I also fail to see how this is "predation and cannibalism."

A matter that needs more attention is the insistence of closed Communion by our Catholic brothers and sisters. In northern Indiana, a group of Mennonites and Catholics are working together on issues such as peace and service. Catholics and Mennonites have much to offer each other from our distinctive Christian traditions. But watering down our biblical, martyr-tested tradition of voluntary adult baptism is not what Mennonites need to hear at this vulnerable juncture of our history. Incidentally, I'm writing this on the birth date of the Anabaptist movement, Jan 21, 1525, when some courageous radicals in Zurich refuted infant baptism by baptizing each other.—*Joseph Yoder, Middlebury, Ind.*

How can an infant answer questions?

The confusing article “Mennonite but Not Anabaptist” disregards the clear teaching of Scripture in Acts. When the Ethiopian requested baptism, Phillip answered, “If you believe with all your heart you may.” The Ethiopian responded, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37). Lydia was baptized after she opened her heart to heed the words spoken by Paul in Acts 16:14. When the jailer asked what he needed to do to be saved in Acts 16:30, he was told to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and he would be saved. Then he was baptized. How can an infant answer these questions? Why should our rational for rebaptism change?—*Dean Swartzendruber, Kalona, Iowa*

Replacing one legalism with another

Chad Mason brings up excellent points in his Jan. 8 article on infant baptism. Certainly any church that categorically rejects the rite of infant baptism has stumbled into legalism and is not open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. However, I fear that his suggested response, that “Mennonites ought to stop rebaptizing people—even those who request it,” is merely replacing one legalism with another.

I respect Mason’s theological concern about the dangers of individualism. However, I offer my own story as witness to the need for Anabaptism. Having been raised in a “culturally Christian” mainline church, I dropped my cultural religion upon arriving at college. After encountering Jesus Christ some years later, I discovered a calling to radically change my life. Had it not been for an evangelical, nondenominational missionary who knew the power of baptism, I might not have had the strength to wash away my past and discover new freedom. Soon after this moment of freedom, I encountered the Mennonites and found a home within the Anabaptist tradition.

I, like Mason, would encourage the church to think seriously about rebaptism but know that if we place restrictive measures upon the Holy Spirit’s rite of baptism, we risk confining ourselves in dogma.—*Andy Johnston, Salt Lake City, Utah*

A pastor questions the Bible he loves

I feel compelled to express my appreciation to both Timothy J. Schultz and the editors of *The Mennonite* for having the courage to deal with the controversial subject of how we view the Bible (“A Pastor Questions the Bible He Loves,” Nov. 20, 2007). Schultz opens himself to criticism by sharing how he feels about taking everything in the Bible literally. It seems to me Schultz’s (a pastor) view of taking an honest look at some of the Bible’s “hard passages” is the only way we are going to reach and retain the youth among us. In their search for a faith that is meaningful, young people today feel the need to look at the hard questions about the Bible. Only when we are honest about our doubts can we appreciate its deeper truths.—*Edwin G. Moyer, Quakertown, Pa.*

In defense of “A Pastor Questions the Bible He Loves,” I found Timothy J. Schultz’s questions, challenges and pointing out the discrepancies of the writings of the Bible a refreshing and honest point of view. I found Marc Hershberger’s narrow point of view (Readers Say, Jan. 8), to be a harsh judgment: I’m right and you’re wrong because I interpret the Bible to be inerrant writings directly from God. I applaud *The Mennonite* for allowing Schultz to Speak Out. What he has expressed in no way diminishes his credentials as a pastor and youth minister. A youth minister that asks questions and leads intelligent discussions with youth and adults can only lead to a better understanding of how the canon evolved with the story of our God.—*Claude D. Kremer, Mount Pleasant, Iowa*

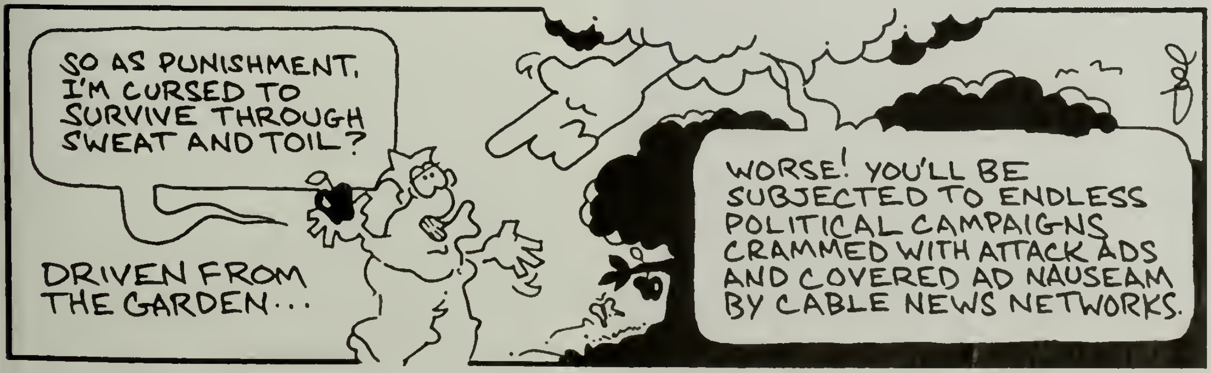
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

I’ve had a “dark night of the soul”—unable to pray and spiritually dry:
(49 votes)

○ Yes (76 %)
○ No (14 %)
○ Not sure (10%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius’ Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


SO AS PUNISHMENT, I'M CURSED TO SURVIVE THROUGH SWEAT AND TOIL?
DRIVEN FROM THE GARDEN...
WORSE! YOU'LL BE SUBJECTED TO ENDLESS POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS CRAMMED WITH ATTACK ADS AND COVERED AD NAUSEAM BY CABLE NEWS NETWORKS.

IN BRIEF

Rich nations owe debt to poor ones

The environmental damage caused to developing nations by the world's richest countries amounts to more than the entire third world debt of $1.8 trillion, according to the first systematic global analysis of the ecological damage imposed by rich countries. The study found there are huge disparities in the ecological footprint inflicted by rich and poor countries on the rest of the world because of differences in consumption. The authors say the west's high living standards are maintained in part through the huge unrecognized ecological debts it has built up with developing countries. "At least to some extent, the rich nations have developed at the expense of the poor and, in effect, there is a debt to the poor," said Richard Norgaard, an ecological economist at the University of California, Berkeley, who led the study. *—The Guardian*

The color of money

In 1974, the U.S. median black income was 63 percent of that of whites. In 2004, a typical black family had an income that was only 58 percent of a typical white family's, said a recent Brookings Institution report. *—Sojourners*

Janet Breneman ordained in Lancaster

PITTSBURGH—Janet Breneman, pastor of Laurel Street Mennonite Church—a Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference congregation—was ordained Jan. 20, although LMC does not permit the ordination of women for ministry.

Jon Unger Brandt

Janet Breneman

Linford King, bishop-overseer for Lancaster City District, ordained Breneman. The district's credentialing committee will hold her credentials.

Isaias Flores, former president of the Honduras Mennonite Church, was the first to credential Breneman, in 1988, during her service in Honduras. Eastern Mennonite Missions had asked Breneman's district of LMC to license her, but they declined. According to Breneman, Flores told her, "That's not a problem for us. We'll license you."

Flores, with his wife and sister, attended the ordination service in Lancaster.

"I felt enveloped by everyone's presence," Breneman says. She says she was also surprised by a video clip and recordings of affirmations from attendees of the Central American Anabaptist Women Theologians in Guatemala last November. Breneman says hearing these messages "broadens the dimensions of the ordination," as it has implications for women around the world.

King says the service and reception had an "international, multiethnic flavor," with songs and preaching in Spanish, and Latin food.

LMC ministers rejected a resolution to ordain women in a January 2007 vote. Joanne Dietzel, LMC coordinator, said last month: "While LMC is supportive of the congregation's recognition and call of Janet's gifts, the current credentialing policy does not recognize the ordination."

On Jan. 18, King received a letter from the executive committee of the Lancaster Conference bishop board warning of further action if he ordains Breneman, but he said on Jan. 22 that he has heard nothing since.*—Anna Groff*

Deborah Laws-Landis

Intergenerational learning

Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School junior Addison Haller, left, interviews Landis Homes resident Austin Hess in December 2007. About 20 LMHS students had a chance to visit and interview Landis Homes residents and learn how events such as the Great Depression and World War II affected them. Landis Homes director of activities Marva Godin said it was a positive experience for the residents. The visit also gave insight into what it is like to live in a retirement community.*—LMS*

Church leader Samuel Hernandez dies at 66

GOSHEN, Ind.—Samuel F. Hernandez, 66, of Goshen, died Jan. 3. After planting the first Hispanic Mennonite church in Woodburn, Ore.—now the Iglesia Menonita Pentecostes—he served as pastor of Iglesia Menonita del Buen Pastor in Goshen (1977–79). He also was executive secretary for the Mennonite Church General Board Office of Latin Concerns and served on the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference Executive Committee. At the time of his death, he was interim pastor of Fuente de Vida in Goshen.

A 1982 graduate of Goshen College, he married Donna Mathison on Dec. 4, 1963. She survives. Also surviving are two daughters, Rachel Rogers, Goshen, and Mary Ellen Hernandez, Chicago; son Sam Hernandez, Livermore, Calif.; four sisters, Consuelo (Tony) Fuentes, Elvira Hernandez and Estella (Frank) Alaniz, all of Corpus Christi, Texas; and Josephine Roman, Goshen; four brothers, Raul (Paula) Hernandez, Corpus Christi, Sisto Hernandez and Isreal (Lupe) Hernandez, both of Mathis, Texas, and Magdaleno Del Bosque, San Antonio, Texas; and three grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a brother, Rueben Hernandez. *—Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference*

Settlers fire on Palestinian shepherds

AT-TUWANI, West Bank—On Jan. 12, settlers from the expanding Havat Ma'on (Hill 833) outpost south of Hebron fired six shots at shepherds grazing their sheep in a nearby valley, according to Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT). The shepherds and international volunteers with them moved to lower ground, sustaining no injuries.

The incident was part of ongoing problems in the area occurring when shepherds from the nearby villages of Tuba and Maghayir al Abeed have attempted to graze their sheep in valleys to the south of the outpost.

The recent problems began the day before, when settlers called soldiers to force the shep-

Brian Nebel

presentatives of Jesus, changing the world'

or Nebel (in white shirt, holding ball) gives instructions
ng the basketball camp in Guatemala City in December
7. Taylor's parents, Brian and Brenda Nebel, are 1983 grad-
es of Hesston (Kan.) College who have kept in touch with
iel Bran, who came to Hesston from Guatemala in 1991
lived with the Nebels. Bran is now a pastor in Guatemala
. In a chapel address, Hesston president Howard Keim
d Brian and Daniel "two representatives of Jesus, chang-
he world." —*Hesston College*

herds off land to the south of the outpost, land that the settlers hope to control. Soldiers arrived and told international volunteers from CPT and Operation Dove that the shepherds must stay off the land.

On Jan. 12, the shepherds returned to the land to graze, despite the previous day's intimidation. Volunteers accompanying the shepherds called the police after the shots were fired.

The police came to the outpost, then turned around. When they tried calling again, the police replied that they "had better things to do."—*CPT*

Church promotes 'Less Oil for Lent' campaign

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Shalom Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg will begin "Less Oil for Lent" campaign on Feb. 6, Ash Wednesday. The goal is to reflect and participate in positive actions that call for an end to the Iraq war and reduce the impacts of climate change. During the six weeks of Lent each person is encouraged to make a pledge to reduce use of oil and gas. It is a chance to work together and share ideas.

Here are examples of actions:

- travel to church by bicycle or walking each Sunday of Lent;
- better insulate and caulk one's home;
- change all light bulbs from incandescent to compact fluorescent;
- eat only locally grown food on Sundays of Lent;
- walk, bike or carpool to work each week;
- make any trip under a mile by bicycle or walking;
- light one's home by candle light on Sundays instead of electricity;
- burn scrap wood for heat instead of fossil fuels;
- insulate the first six feet of hot water pipes;
- be a vegetarian for six weeks of Lent;
- turn down the hot water heater to 115° F;
- install a programmable thermostat;
- install an efficient shower head and reduce CO^2 by 1.5 tons annually.

For more information, call Tom Benevento, 540-433-2363, Earl Martin, 540-432-6388 or Sam Nickels, 540-574-2233.—*Shalom Mennonite Church*

MMA expands partnership with credit union

GOSHEN, Ind.—MMA (Mennonite Mutual Aid) and Mennonite Financial Federal Credit Union, headquartered in Lancaster, Pa., continue to expand their partnership by opening joint offices. A joint office was scheduled to open in Sarasota, Fla., on Feb. 1, and MMA is expanding the Mennonite Financial building in Kidron, Ohio, so it can join Mennonite Financial there later this year.

As the stewardship agency for Mennonite Church USA, MMA has been interested in moving into banking services but does not want to duplicate the services or compete with Mennonite Financial, says MMA president Larry Miller.

"When people think there's a merger," Miller says, "the first thing people say is, 'Who won and who lost?' It's a partnership. We both serve the church community. You have to give up some control and develop trusting relationships and have the same vision."

In October 2007, Mennonite Financial opened a small office at MMA's corporate headquarters in Goshen to serve MMA employees. Miller says MMA hopes to open four more offices with Mennonite Financial in the next two years but declined to name the communities specifically. —*Everett J. Thomas*

—*compiled by Gordon Houser*

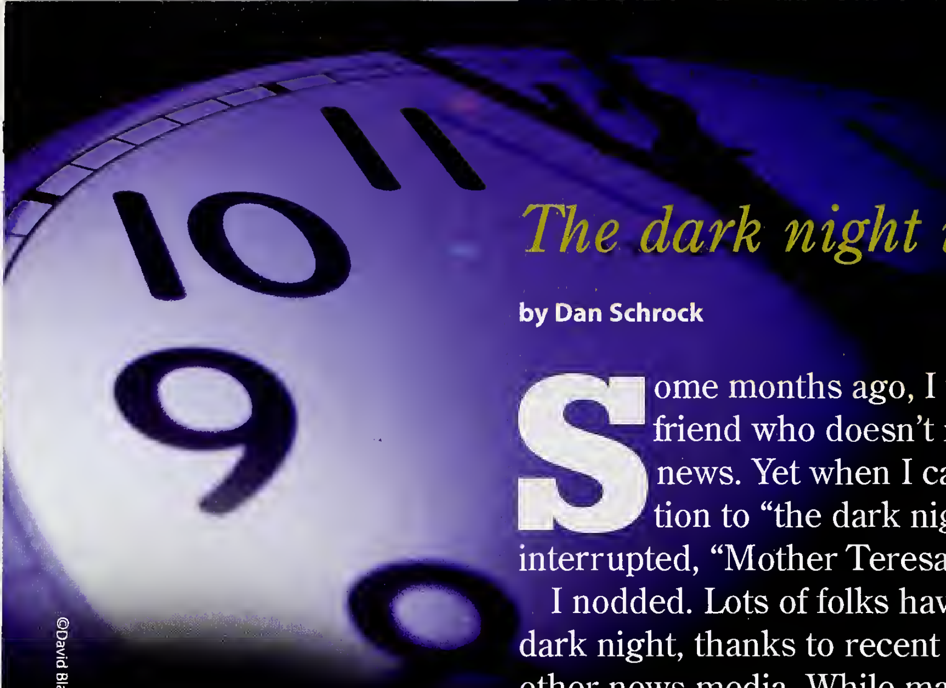
IN BRIEF

Moore to coach soccer at Bethel

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has hired Jason Moore to head up the men's and women's soccer programs. A graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., Moore began his coaching career in 1999 as an assistant women's soccer coach at EMU, where he helped start the women's program, compiling a 55-33-4 record over five seasons. Moore spent the last two seasons as a volunteer assistant coach for the women's soccer program at James Madison University in Harrisonburg. —*Bethel College*

OurFaith Digest suspends issue

The board of directors and editor of *OurFaith Digest*, met Jan. 22-23 in Harrisonburg, Va. After noting that net income for the magazine decreased more than $23,000 from 2006 to 2007 and that advertising commitments were down for the Spring issue, the group decided to suspend that issue. The group noted rising costs, a weak economy and the rapid switch to electronic media, especially among youth. The directors are expected to deal with the future direction of the ministry in their next meeting, on Feb. 21. —*OurFaith Digest*



©David Black | Imagebase.com

When you

The dark night is a gift of God.

by Dan Schrock

Some months ago, I was eating sandwiches with a friend who doesn't normally pay attention to the news. Yet when I casually referred in our conversation to "the dark night," he brightened. "Oh yes," he interrupted, "Mother Teresa had that, didn't she?"

I nodded. Lots of folks have heard about Mother Teresa's dark night, thanks to recent coverage in *Time* magazine and other news media. While many Christians throughout history have gone through the dark night, Mother Teresa's dark night was unusual in that it lasted 50 years.

The dark night is a special spiritual experience that has three distinguishing signs, which must occur simultaneously:

- an inability to pray in our usual way,
- a general sense of dryness in our spiritual life,
- an increasing wish to be alone in loving awareness of God.

The dark night is not due to religious doubt, psychological depression, spiritual laziness or some new and terrible sin. Instead, the dark night is a gift of God.

The dark night is not due to religious doubt, psychological depression, spiritual laziness or some new and terrible sin.

Carrie's story

Carrie's story illustrates how the dark night can unfold. Since her baptism in high school, Carrie has participated actively in the church. She has led singing, taught Sunday school, served on committees and volunteered in the congregation's ministry to homeless people. For many years, her inner life of prayer has been equally active. Typically she has prayed for 15 minutes before going to work and 10 minutes before going to bed. In the morning she read from the Bible, then praised God, interceded for her friends and petitioned for herself. Before bedtime, she reviewed the events of her day, confessed the sins she committed and thanked God for the graces she encountered. This pattern of prayer nourished Carrie for years and kept her connected to God.

But then Carrie felt like she had walked into a desert. During prayer she had a hard time finding words, and when they finally came, the words floated into empty space, as if God had fled the universe. Hoping that the sense of God's presence would come back if she prayed longer, she doubled the length of her prayers, but it didn't work. God seemed to have abandoned her.

Her work at the church also became dissatisfying. Song leading felt coldly mechanical rather than attuned to the Holy Spirit. While teaching her class, the life seemed to have gone out of the Bible. Working with women at the homeless shelter, once a joy, was now drudgery. She felt spiritually flat, bereft and restless. Yearning for God, she sometimes sat in her bedroom and cried. "What's wrong with me? Why, God, have you forsaken me?"

Two things gave her peace. The first was sitting silently by the bay window in her living room, staring at the large bed of native grasses and flowers she had planted the year before. The second was prayerfully walking an outdoor labyrinth at a retreat center near her house.

The dark night among Mennonites

Carrie (a fictitious person whose story is based on many people I've known) is in a dark night. In my work as a pastor and spiritual director, I've watched many Christians struggle through a dark night. So in 2005-2006, I completed a research project (for a doctor of ministry degree) on the dark night among Mennonites. While my research was mainly qualitative rather than quantitative, in the early phase I surveyed 160 adults in my congregation and 169 credentialed ministers in my area conference (Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference) to get preliminary data on how widespread the dark night might be.

Of the surveys returned, 40 percent of lay people in the congregation and 59 percent of ministers in the conference claimed that at some point they simultaneously experienced all three signs of the dark night. These figures should be treated cautiously because I am not trained in the methods of rigorous, quantitative research. Yet these figures—four in 10 lay people and six in 10 ministers—do suggest that the dark night happens frequently among Mennonites, though we rarely discuss it. Four-fifths of lay people said they have never known any Mennonite to talk, write, preach or teach about the dark night.

Next I interviewed 15 people who were then, or once had been, in a dark night. This group included seven lay people and eight ministers (nine women and six men), ranging in age from 24 to 82. During their dark night, most of these people felt bewildered, since little in their religious training had prepared them to understand what God does in the night or how they could cooperate with it.

Forty percent of lay people in the congregation and 59 percent of ministers in the conference claimed that at some point they simultaneously experienced all three signs of the dark night.

From meditation to contemplation

The dark night is a gift from God that orients us more fully to light and love. God does this by lowering our interest in meditation and heightening our interest in contemplation.

Meditation refers to spiritual practices that mainly use words, images and our five senses. Examples of meditation include almost any prayer that relies on words, many forms of Bible study (although not all), memorization and Christian education classes, whether taught by lecture or discussion. Most worship services fit here as well,

Continued on page 10

can't pray

Continued from page 9

including traditional, contemporary, charismatic and liturgical worship. We largely control the practices of meditation, having much say about when, where and how they happen.

Contemplation, by contrast, is a loving, peaceful and transforming inflow of God that comes to us as pure gift, usually beyond words, images and our five senses. Some spiritual practices are specifically designed to open us to contemplation, including centering prayer, lectio divina, silence and walking a labyrinth. However, we cannot control when contemplation begins or ends.

During the dark night, God reduces our interest in meditation in order to increase our interest in contemplation. The process is similar to weaning infants from breast milk. When we wanted to wean our two sons, my wife and I sometimes refused to give them breast milk in order to increase their hunger for other food, such as puréed carrots. We knew they could not grow into adulthood unless they ate a variety of foods in addition to milk. We were successful. Today our sons eat many different foods, including milk and milk by-products.

As contemplation roots people more securely in Christ, they become more committed to peace, forgiveness, love and justice.

Both meditation and contemplation belong to a rich spiritual life in Christ. God initiates a dark night to wean us away from a narrower range of spiritual practices (meditation) and deepen our interest in a broader range of practices (contemplation). The story of Carrie illustrates this. God reduces her satisfaction in prayers of intercession and petition in order to interest her in silent, contemplative prayer. As Carrie sits quietly gazing out her bay window, the Holy Spirit is pouring grace, love and shalom into her. The writer of Ephesians describes this as knowing "the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (3:19).

Changes

My interviews of Mennonites who were in or had emerged from a dark night revealed five patterns.

1. While the dark night often appears in prayer, it can also appear in marriage, family life or the workplace.
2. People often feel confused about what is happening to them. This sense of obscurity is one reason we might call the night "obscure" rather than "dark."
3. God acts during the dark night to purify us from our disordered attachments to power, prestige and possessions that hinder our ability to worship God with all our heart, mind and spirit (Mark 12:29-30).
4. As people emerge from the night, a new and deeper friendship with God takes shape that they have never before experienced.
5. The growth of contemplation makes people more profoundly countercultural. As contemplation roots them more securely in Christ, they become more committed to peace, forgiveness, love and justice. Their mission becomes more pronounced.

The dark night is therefore a gift from God, though it doesn't feel that way at first. Early on, it seems that God has forsaken us; yet we know God has not, for we can go nowhere where God is not (Psalm 139). While the night continues, God works for our good, intricately shaping us more nearly into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Over the several years of her obscure night, Carrie incorporated two other contemplative practices, lectio divina and centering prayer, into her daily life. Gradually she noticed the subtle movements of God's presence in her life, work and church. Not only did she feel more united with Christ than ever before, but she ultimately left her job with its comfortable income and accepted a lower-income position in order to work more closely with the homeless in her city. Through the dark night, the Holy Spirit shaped Carrie to participate more fully in God's mission.

Dan Schrock is one of the pastors at Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Goshen, Ind. He is writing a book on the dark night and may be contacted through his Web site, www.danschrock.org.

Sinners

by Nina Forsythe

Why today do I think of my college English teacher
who wrote in the margin of my paper, "Surely you're not that bad,"
when I confessed I was no better than a murderer?

Perhaps because I vacuumed up a spider
even though I like spiders—
vacuumed it up and didn't care
because it was in my way at that moment
just as we all, at times—too many times—
brush away what gets in the way.

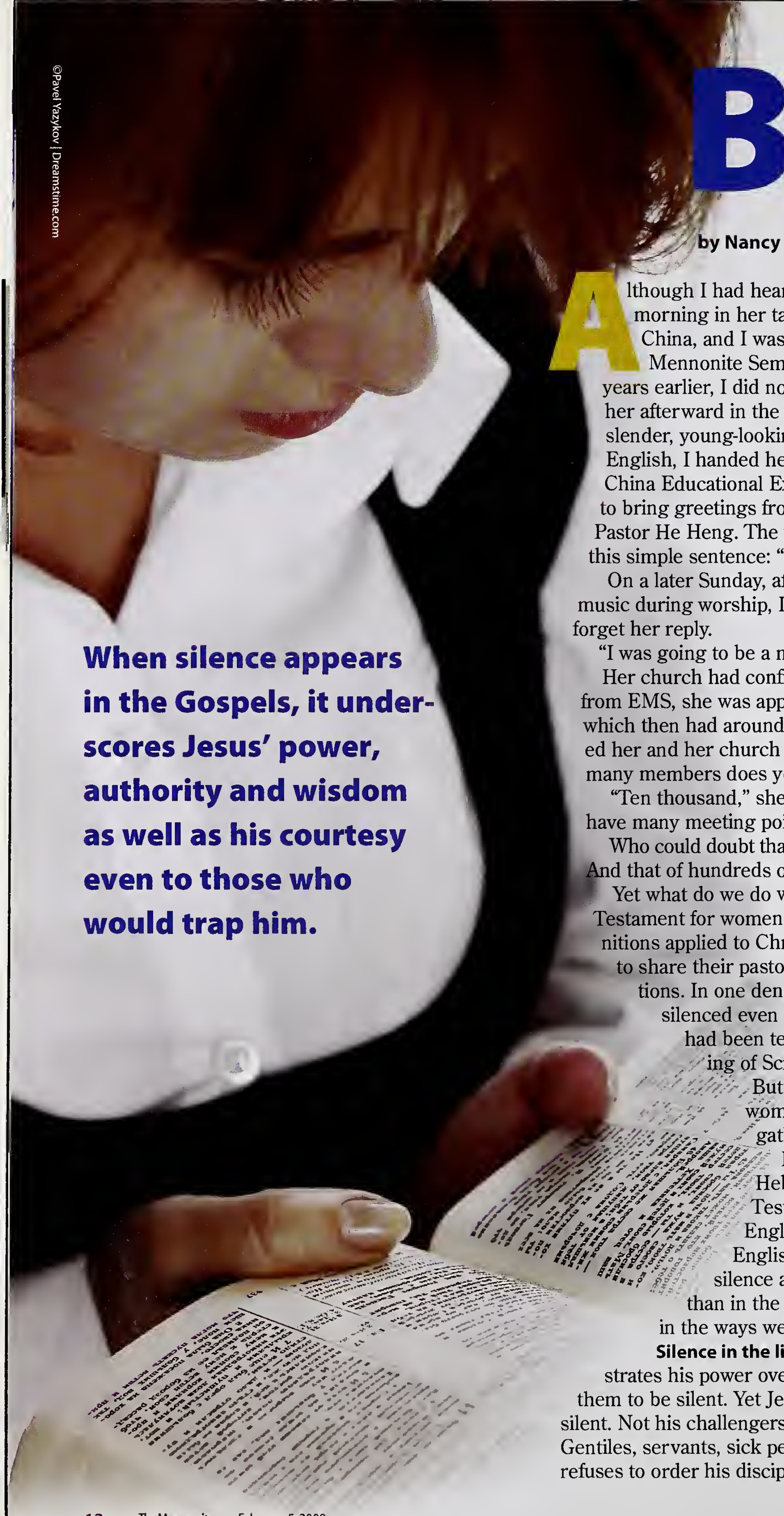
You too, a good and loving mother,
have brushed off your child because you were busy,
brushed off, shoved, yelled at, even slapped your darling,
vacuumed a bit of his life.

And, really, it's only a matter of increments
from caring to killing.
We look at a murderer and maybe see ourselves
in different circumstances—there but for the grace of God—
but who looks at herself and sees a murderer?

We kill and we kill and we kill
even when we don't realize it,
when we don't mean to, when we try not to.
We're all sinners helpless against ourselves,
and out of the self rises the rage and pride and coldness
that we believe is not our real self,
but it's us, too.

The voice that soothes and denies is false.
Hard and true is the remorse that doubles us over and twists our gut.
Mea culpa
Mea culpa
Mea maxima culpa

Nina Forsythe lives in Frostburg, Md.



©Pavel Yazykov | Dreamstime.com

Be sile

by Nancy V. Lee

Although I had heard of Pastor He Heng before that Sunday morning in her tall, white, three-story church in Shenyang, China, and I was aware she had graduated from Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS) in Harrisonburg, Va., some years earlier, I did not know her. Worried that I might miss her afterward in the crowd of people and realizing that the slender, young-looking woman sitting beside me understood English, I handed her a note. In it I introduced myself as a China Educational Exchange teacher and wrote that I wanted to bring greetings from the CEE director, Myrrl Byler, to Pastor He Heng. The woman smiled and returned my note with this simple sentence: "I am He Heng."

On a later Sunday, after she had played piano for the special music during worship, I complimented her on her skill. I'll never forget her reply.

"I was going to be a musician," she said, "but God called me."

Her church had confirmed that call. After she had returned from EMS, she was appointed the lead pastor of this church, which then had around 5,000 members. In 2002, when I last visited her and her church and sat talking with her, I asked, "How many members does your church now have?"

"Ten thousand," she said, "too many to count. And we also have many meeting points."

Who could doubt that God was—and is—blessing her ministry? And that of hundreds of other women pastors in China.

When silence appears in the Gospels, it underscores Jesus' power, authority and wisdom as well as his courtesy even to those who would trap him.

Yet what do we do with the admonitions in the New Testament for women to be silent? I keep hearing these admonitions applied to Christian women in America who feel called to share their pastoral and teaching gifts with their congregations. In one denomination, the new pastor, a man, silenced even a Sunday school teacher, a woman who had been teaching for years, on the basis of his reading of Scripture.

But does the New Testament really say that women—not men—are to be silent in worship gatherings?

I've surveyed the appearances in the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament of all the words translated into English in some form of "silence." While the English word may feel as colorless as water, silence as an event is powerful and never more so than in the lives of Jesus and the apostles—but not in the ways we expect.

Silence in the life of Jesus: In the Gospels, Jesus demonstrates his power over nature and evil spirits by commanding them to be silent. Yet Jesus never tells any human being to be silent. Not his challengers—the Scribes and Pharisees—not the Gentiles, servants, sick people, women or children. In fact, he refuses to order his disciples not to make a sound during his tri-

nt—to hear

The Bible's use of 'silence' may surprise you.

umphal entry into Jerusalem. The closest he comes to telling any person not to speak occurs right after his transfiguration, when he commands Peter, James and John not to tell anyone about it until he has been raised from the dead, and they keep "silent."

Actually, what Jesus asks and does often results in silence, the inability to say anything, from those around him. "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save a life or to kill?"

The reply is silence.

Over and over, the wisdom of Jesus leaves his astonished questioners speechless, and readers see their growing frustration and enmity. Thus when silence appears in the Gospels, it underscores Jesus' power, authority and wisdom as well as his courtesy even to those who would trap him. And in his trial before the Sanhedrin, his silence speaks of his submission to the plan of God.

Silence in the early church: The key to understanding Paul's instructions regarding silence in his letters lies in events in the book of Acts. In this often tumultuous time of the early church, when there are no convenient loudspeaker systems, if the crowds of men and women are to understand what the apostles are saying, they have to be quiet. Sometimes hand signals work. Peter uses one to be heard so that he can explain how the Lord rescued him from prison. Paul uses another to hush the angry mob in Jerusalem (Acts 21:40-22:2), and his Hebrew quiets them even more. Here the Greek word, a form of "hesychia," means that they become not only quiet but peaceful.

It is important to find out whom Paul is addressing in his letters. Here, in their various treatments of silence, our modern translations are not helpful. For example, in 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10, while the people Paul is writing to are the "brethren" in the KJV and the RSV, "brothers" in the NIV, and the "dear brothers" in the paraphrased Living Bible, the same people are the vague "beloved" in the NRSV, and the "brothers and sisters" in the TNIV. Yet the Greek is clear: Paul's word is "brothers."

Interestingly, he does not then use the parallel sisters but women, a term giving the translators little difficulty, except those trying to be inclusive. While I generally applaud such efforts, sometimes they result in confusing directives to women. Are they a mixed group (in 1 Corinthians 14:26-32) who are to take their turns speaking? If so, women, like the men, will speak. Actually, in this passage, with its clear Greek distinction between the "brothers" and the "women," the men are to be silent (sigao) if no one present can interpret the language.

Then, a few sentences later, Paul directs that "women should be silent in the churches." Yes, the commentators have had a hard time with this directive for women. One reason is that in a previous chapter (11), Paul indicates that women have a right to pray and preach in public. Other reasons are the ways Paul mentions women believers in his letters as important workers in the churches and for the gospel. One commentator notes that "in the six undisputed letters apart from 1 Corinthians, *no passage suggests any limitation on the roles or functions of women in the Pauline churches* [the author's italics]."

In the time of the early Christians, their new sexual equality led to a disregard for orderliness and courtesy during worship.

John T. Bristow explains that the Greek word, "sigao," means a voluntary silence. It could also be a request and is "the kind of silence asked for in the midst of disorder and clamor." Explaining the verb used in 1 Corinthians 14:35b, which can be translated "speak" or simply "talk," he concludes that Paul is just saying that "it is shameful for women to keep talking during the worship service."

He gives an interesting example of this problem in a church in another country in the 1920s. The women who came to the worship services there had never previously attended a public meeting. To them these meetings were a chance to catch up on the news and even shout questions across the aisle to their husbands. As the missionary wife tried to tell these women to listen, she muttered to herself, "Just like Corinth; it just couldn't be more like Corinth."

Bristow explains that in the time of the early Christians, their new sexual equality "led to a disregard for orderliness and courtesy during worship, especially on the part of women who were unaccustomed to listening to public speakers or to

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13

participating in public worship. To such women, Paul said, 'Hush up.'"

In other words, as in events in Acts, women, like men, are to keep silent so that everyone can hear and understand.

Other confusing translations: It is the handling by translators of the Greek word "hesychia" that is most significant. In 1 and 2 Thessalonians, the "brothers" are to live and work quietly—not silently. Actually, the same Greek word is in certain instances translated also in a positive way about women. In Luke 23:55-56, the women who return to the tomb have rested, not become silent. In 1 Peter 3:4, the advice to wives includes their having a "gentle and quiet [not silent] spirit."

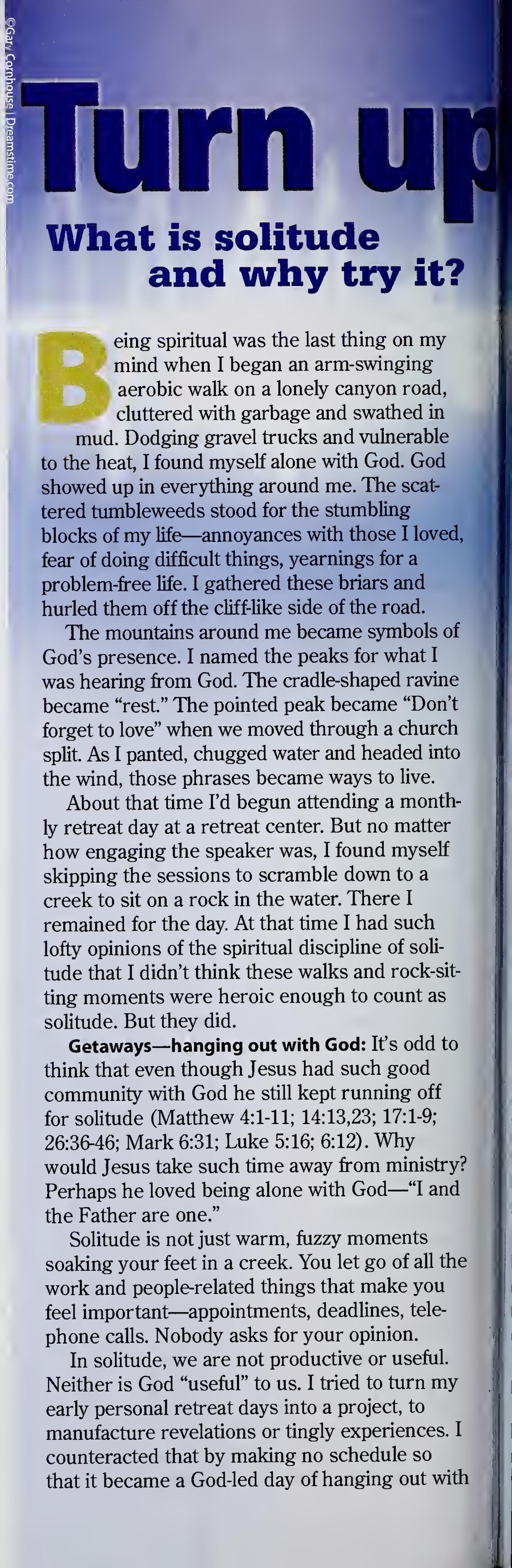
In contrast, this hesychia, when translated about women in other passages, becomes not quiet or quietness but inexplicably—and damagingly—silence. Paul in some translations of 1 Timothy 2:11-12 asks women to "learn in silence [not quietly]"; and instead of teaching or having authority over a man, "she is to keep silent [not to listen peaceably]."

Faith Martin, in her book *Call Me Blessed: The Emerging Christian Woman*, discusses the translators' contradictory choices for hesychia. She writes, "Consistent translation of Paul's original words [in 1 Timothy 2:11] would have given us 'Let a woman settle down and submit to instruction.' A more fair translation of verse 12 would read, 'She is to be peaceable.'"

She sees the problem beginning with the "first translation of the New Testament from the original Greek into English by 1526 by William Tyndale." She continues that then "the decision to silence the women and quiet the men would seem altogether natural considering the cultural consensus regarding the role of women in that century."

Tragically these arbitrarily chosen and contradictory translations came to play a major role in the centuries-old silencing of the gifts of the Spirit poured out at Pentecost—not only on the sons but also on the daughters (Acts 2:17). Regarding Paul, who wrote so warmly about Deacon Phoebe, "co-workers" Priscilla and Aquila, the "mother" of both Rufus and himself, as well as other "brothers and sisters" in Romans 16, it seems obvious that with his simple admonitions in other letters to worship in an orderly way, he never meant to bar a vast group of believers from sharing these gifts.

Nancy V. Lee lives in Harrisonburg, Va.



©Gary Cornhouse | Dreamstime.com

Turn up

What is solitude and why try it?

Being spiritual was the last thing on my mind when I began an arm-swinging aerobic walk on a lonely canyon road, cluttered with garbage and swathed in mud. Dodging gravel trucks and vulnerable to the heat, I found myself alone with God. God showed up in everything around me. The scattered tumbleweeds stood for the stumbling blocks of my life—annoyances with those I loved, fear of doing difficult things, yearnings for a problem-free life. I gathered these briars and hurled them off the cliff-like side of the road.

The mountains around me became symbols of God's presence. I named the peaks for what I was hearing from God. The cradle-shaped ravine became "rest." The pointed peak became "Don't forget to love" when we moved through a church split. As I panted, chugged water and headed into the wind, those phrases became ways to live.

About that time I'd begun attending a monthly retreat day at a retreat center. But no matter how engaging the speaker was, I found myself skipping the sessions to scramble down to a creek to sit on a rock in the water. There I remained for the day. At that time I had such lofty opinions of the spiritual discipline of solitude that I didn't think these walks and rock-sitting moments were heroic enough to count as solitude. But they did.

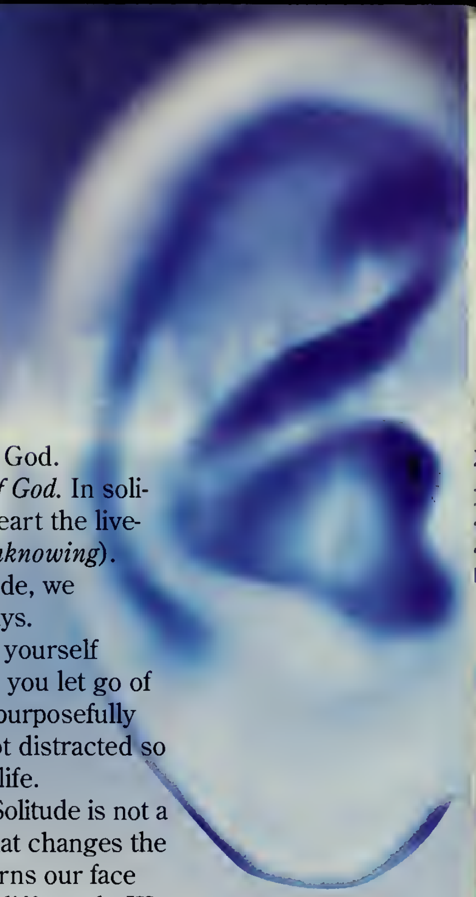
Getaways—hanging out with God: It's odd to think that even though Jesus had such good community with God he still kept running off for solitude (Matthew 4:1-11; 14:13,23; 17:1-9; 26:36-46; Mark 6:31; Luke 5:16; 6:12). Why would Jesus take such time away from ministry? Perhaps he loved being alone with God—"I and the Father are one."

Solitude is not just warm, fuzzy moments soaking your feet in a creek. You let go of all the work and people-related things that make you feel important—appointments, deadlines, telephone calls. Nobody asks for your opinion.

In solitude, we are not productive or useful. Neither is God "useful" to us. I tried to turn my early personal retreat days into a project, to manufacture revelations or tingly experiences. I counteracted that by making no schedule so that it became a God-led day of hanging out with

the quiet

by Jan Johnson



God. Now my only rule is that I observe silence and solitude. I listen to what God leads me to do that day. Even now I find myself waiting for the solitude to feel rewarding, but it may not. Afterward, I realize I loved it. I am much like Jacob after he awakened from his angel-climbing ladder dream: "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it" (Genesis 28:16).

Enemies show up: Be prepared in solitude for committee members who live in your head to show up. These voices are our habits of thinking that arise from the parts of us yet to be healed. Mine include the following:

The Looking Good Kid works hard to be admired out of fear of not being good enough. If I think I hear God saying: "Be perfect. Get it right. Don't make any mistakes—then I'll be proud of you," this is not God but the looking good kid.

The Rescuer thinks of ways to help others so they have to love me. As a result, busyness is next to godliness. If I think I hear God say, "Help people till it exhausts you. Make people happy," that is not God but my rescuer sabotaging my solitude.

The Attitude Police Officer wants everything done right. It evaluates, criticizes and ruins my attempts to focus on God. It sabotages thoughts so that I always hear God correcting me.

On my canyon road walks, this last member often took over and rehearsed long hostile speeches to those with whom I disagreed, entrenching myself in reasons I was right. Then followed equally virulent diatribes against myself and despair over how my anger had taken over. It took several years to replace these thoughts with prayer for those who irritated me. Yet that was what I needed to do, and solitude trained my soul to love when I wanted to criticize.

Dismissing the voices of the committee members is best done gently. To be upset about failings does not help. That only affirms that my spirituality is about me, not God. I usher them to the door of my mind and give them no more airplay.

How solitude helps: Time alone retrains thought patterns and even one's body.

Hearing God. The first step in hearing God is knowing who God is not—the voices of the "committee" or habitual poisonous thinking patterns. As we become acquainted with them and practiced in dismissing them, we make room for God.

Experiencing the companionship of God. In solitude you learn to "nourish in your heart the lively longing for God" (*The Cloud of Unknowing*). As we practice longer times of solitude, we learn to love soaking in what God says.

Letting go of busyness. As you free yourself from the burden of being important, you let go of hurry and busyness. You live more purposefully from a quiet center in life and are not distracted so easily. You enjoy leaving margins in life.

Teaching us how to be with others. Solitude is not a me-myself-and-I discipline but one that changes the way you interact with people. God turns our face toward others because we see them differently. We come away from solitude more fit to be with people: quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry. Because we slow down, we catch ourselves before we make slighting comments we regret later.

Solitude is a place of hearing God and letting go of all that is not God. Out of this transformed self, real ministry flows.

Jan Johnson is the author of When the Soul Listens, Enjoying the Presence of God *and* Spiritual Disciplines Bible Studies *(www.janjohnson.org).*

What am I likely to hear?

While the first step in hearing God is to clear out the voices that are not God, the next step is to have in mind the kinds of things God is likely to say. What God says to us today will agree with what God said to folks in the Bible. Here are some of God's themes:

Love. The most common theme in both Testaments is the great commandments to love God and others (Matthew 22:37-39; Deuteronomy 6:5; Luke 19:18). We're told to love enemies, strangers, the needy—all the while speaking truth as well (Ephesians 4:15, Matthew 5:44; 25:35, 43; 1 Thessalonians 5:12).

Comfort: "I, I am he who comforts you" (Isaiah 51:12); "I will never leave you or forsake you" (Exodus 3:12; John 14:18).

Surrender: Not everything God said was warm and fuzzy. Jesus told one man to stop sinning (John 5:14). God confronted David through Nathan (2 Samuel 12:1-14). God often challenges us the way Jesus challenged the rich young ruler to sell his riches and follow him (Mark 10:17-22). Yet these challenges are always steeped in love, as Jesus "looked at him and loved him."

God's purposes: God nudges us forward in ministry, imitating God's activities, such as creatively bringing forth light (Genesis 1:3) into dark situations (2 Corinthians 4:6). Expect also to hear God weep. The prophetic books are full of God grieving over Israel's wickedness and calling her to return. As I read newspapers and magazines, God nudges me to weep. These are not just news stories but people God loves. God also rejoices and asks us to rejoice: "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8).—*jj*

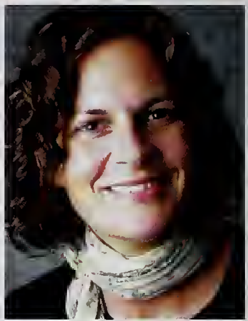
Supportive

Mennonite higher education—part 3

by J. Daniel Hess

Lydie Assefa

Raylene Hinz-Penner


Tammy Krause

Irene Kanagy, a clinical counselor in Indianapolis, says that some of the best years of her life occurred at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., where, in the context of professors, staff and students, she learned about grace. "I shall never forget Professor Willard Swartley's praying with me about an impending decision."

Today there are more than 4,500 students enrolled in Mennonite higher education. If the presidents of those institutions realize a principal goal, current students will learn that "our campuses are part of the body of Christ—supportive communities where knowledge, skills and character are shaped."

This desired outcome—that students experience community—may be put to the test by asking students and alumni whether in fact they have found on the campuses of our church-related colleges, universities and seminaries a place of fellowship, support and encouragement.

The prof's door was always open.—Lydie Assefa

Lydie Assefa (Goshen, 2009) is a good athlete and conscientious student, a graduate of a 3,000-plus urban high school. In her second year at Goshen (Ind.) College, fall sports and a heavy course load more than filled her schedule. One time she worked late into the night to prepare a report for a history class. But the next morning, weary and distracted, she forgot to carry the paper to class, which upset her all the more. The professor gave her permission to bring it to his office at her first opportunity.

After several classes she retrieved her paper and carried it to the office. Unfortunately for her, the prof's door was open, so instead of slipping it anonymously under the door, she had to hand it to him. As she turned away, the professor said, "Lydie, are you OK?"

The question brought tears and then a calming and encouraging conversation with the prof, who assured her that she was capable of working through the busy time and of completing the class well.

Kurt Horst (Hesston, 1973) is currently the conference minister of Alleghany Mennonite Conference, which means he has pastoral and administrative leadership of 30 congregations, most of them in central and western Pennsylvania.

Kurt remembers Hesston (Kan.) College as a place of personal affirmation, where professors and staff place higher value on who you are than on what grades you make. "I felt that," he says.

Kurt's leadership gifts were noticed, affirmed and developed, first as a student and athlete (soccer, basketball, track), then as a "super peer" in dorm supervision and later working with John Lederach, campus chaplain. To this day, college, for Kurt, represents a time of guided leadership development.

Raylene Hinz-Penner (Bethel, 1970) grew up in the Oklahoma panhandle. She was part of a resourceful family and intellectually stimulating congregation but was somewhat alone in the larger community of youth. "At Bethel College [North Newton, Kan.], what sent me on a steep learning curve were the students. The students were good, loved to learn and carried back to the dorm conversations occurring in classes."

Raylene is now a professor at Washburn University in Topeka, Kan. Her Bethel College experience now influences her approach to education. Raylene says she doesn't teach subjects; she teaches people. On the first day of creative writing class she asks students to record on an index card their interests and dreams. Several class periods later she brings the cards to class, and with permission of the students, pulls out the cards and

communities

reads. Then she says, “Look around you. See your classmates. What an opportunity we have to learn from each other!”

> **What sent me on a steep learning curve were the students.**—Raylene Hinz-Penner

Paul Gingrich (EMC, 1952; AMBS, 1970) is known to the church largely as a missionary to Ethiopia, director of church relations and campus minister at Goshen College, president of Mennonite Board of Missions and peace evangelist for Mennonite Church USA. However, what Paul now sees as his own greatest accomplishment is the mentoring of people who now lead the church.

The fact of his gift of mentoring doesn’t surprise me, because his story of Mennonite higher education is a continuing tribute to those who mentored him. At Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va., Gingrich asked J.L. Stauffer to be his mentor, then discovered that others cared for him and guided him: George R. Brunk, B. Charles Hostetter (“always there for me”), J. Mark Stauffer (“He appointed me assistant director to his chorus”), Dorothy Kemrer; C.K. Lehman (“a great teacher”), R. Ralph Hostetter and others.

In Ethiopia he was profoundly affected by Bible studies led by a visiting professor from Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., Paul Miller. Later, at AMBS, Paul Gingrich’s mentors were Millard Lind, Howard Charles and John Howard Yoder. At Goshen it was J. Lawrence Burkholder.

Tammy Krause: With guidance of Professor Howard Zehr of Eastern Mennonite University’s Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, Tammy Krause (EMU, 1999) became involved in capital cases in which a federal public defender works on behalf of an alleged offender who faces the death penalty. After having worked in a number of high-profile cases, Tammy was asked to get involved in the trial of Zacarias Moussaoui, who was later convicted of participating in the 9/11 attacks. She went to EMU president Loren Swartzendruber to ask permission to be involved in what could backfire onto the institution. “He asked me to explain what I intended to do. After hearing me, he said, ‘Tammy, you have a responsibility to go.’ ”

Before long, Tammy and federal defender Richard Burr were presenting as partners in EMU’s Summer Peacebuilding Institute.

Tammy, now studying law in England, says, “I can’t overemphasize how important EMU has been to me and to the development of my work. How proud I was that this university was backing me up!”

Sheri Hostetler: First Mennonite Church of San Francisco is a small and diverse community, its members comprised of families and singles, young and old, with contrasting social, economic and political orientations. Sheri Hostetler (Bluffton, 1984), the pastor, aspires to build community with this diversity. To accomplish that goal, Sheri tries to cultivate spiritual disciplines and religious imagination in her own life and in others.

Sheri’s undergraduate years at Bluffton (Ohio) College provided a base for imagination and spirituality. “I loved it. We had a really good class (five of us women still meet regularly). I knew my profs, and they invited me to their homes. I got a lot of writing experience, including a position on the campus newspaper and an internship with the local newspaper. There, in those formative years, I was known, I was in community with wonderful peers and I inculcated the values of my profs. I might have become a pastor without Bluffton, yet I know that Bluffton played a significant role in shaping my sense of myself—a Mennonite and a Christian living in ‘grounded openness’ to seekers of faith.”

> **How proud I was that this university was backing me up!**—Tammy Krause

We typically think of our congregations as extended families and communities of faith. Many of the people I spoke with use those same terms when recalling their days in Mennonite higher education. I have also heard of many accounts of students maintaining contact with their professors and student groups continuing to correspond and meet together long after graduation. Their words confirm that Mennonite higher education provides “supportive communities where knowledge, skills and character are shaped.”

J. Daniel Hess is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. This is the third of six articles on Mennonite higher education.

Reflections on baptism

Spencer Bradford is part-time pastor of Durham (N.C.) Mennonite Church. He also organizes peace education and advocacy for the North Carolina Council of Churches.

God brought me to Mennonites with help from pacifist Catholics, Methodists and other Christians who had experienced baptism in their churches differently from Mennonite practice. I've also worked the past 16 years in local antipoverty ministries in partnership with Christians having various experiences of baptism and confirmation. I came to resonate with some of the perspectives these communities emphasize in baptism, such as the view of baptism as a site of God's action for reconciliation and renewal, not just an act of decision by the individual believer and the church. So baptism functions not just as outward expression of individual feeling but as something God is acting in through the church. So I have a more sacramental understanding of baptism than most Mennonites, but I've continued to hold as central the Anabaptist emphases on a personal faith confession and a discipleship covenant of allegiance to God's new regime in Jesus.

As an ecumenical Christian who's also a Mennonite pastor, I've come to affirm the potential validity of infant baptism in the practice of other communions when it has been "completed" by the kind of personal confession and discipleship covenanting usually sought in confirmation (or in other experiences). In some cases, discernment with an individual and others will lead to joining our church through a membership covenant affirming their prior baptism. In others, such discernment may conclude prior acts were not baptismal and that baptism is needed for church membership. The latter is painful for our relationship with other communions, but that's indicative of the pain of centuries of disagreement and division for which there is no easy solution and which continues to demand labor and prayer for reconciliation. This may not be a happier resolution than wholesale rejection of infant baptism or unconditional endorsement of it, but it tries to hold together the reality of God's recurrent, gracious activity in sister communions and the inescapable testimony of Scripture on baptism as a covenant of personal repentance and allegiance.

There are five kinds of questions I've found helpful for discerning the call to baptism with young people and mentors, and these can also be helpful for discernment around the validity of a prior baptismal rite for adults coming to a Mennonite church from an infant-baptizing church. These questions focus on spiritual experience in a manner that weaves together understanding, conviction and feeling. There is no correct answer to each that could be checked off, but affirming responses require some reflection on one's condition at the time of a baptismal experience and indicate the fullness of that practice.

1. Could the believer tell the story of God's redemption of the world in Jesus and connect that with their own story? Do they tell the story of Jesus' mission faithfully and as personal?

2. Could the believer relate the experience of giving and receiving costly gifts of love? Do they recognize grace, express gratitude and anticipate sharing good with others?

3. Did the believer understand the nature of a promise? Were they accountable to commitments they made?

4. Could the believer extend forgiveness and seek to forego retaliation? How had they experienced giving and receiving forgiveness?

5. Does the believer intend a faith-filled death? And is the community prepared to give the believer to death in discipleship to Jesus?

The last question touches on a sense of one's mortality and a willingness to have God do with that what God will, even if it's not the ending we would choose for ourselves. Baptism becomes in part a willing acceptance of a death we cannot choose but that we turn over to God to choose for us in Christ, no matter the cost.

Some such discernment around infant baptism and confirmation with those coming from sacramental traditions is needed, if baptism is to be the covenant commitment of an individual to God's new order as well as the instrument God uses in the church to signify an individual's reconciliation and renewal into God's new society. That discernment shows respect for the serious nature of baptism in those communities themselves and will contribute to a shared seriousness for baptismal living in our own. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Developing spiritual roots**—Emily Will
- **Growing with God through gardening**—Kristin Van Tassel

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

U.S. and Canadian Mennonites to meet

Denominations to gather at binational summit July 8-10 in Winnipeg.

All members of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada are invited to meet together at a binational "People's Summit for Faithful Living" at the Canadian Mennonite University campus July 8-10 in Winnipeg.

A "summit" is not what Mennonite Church USA or Mennonite Church Canada normally call a gathering of their members.

Summits are often restricted to certain leaders or imply a sense of secrecy. Summits always communicate a sense of urgency.

It is a sense of urgency that led planners to call this binational gathering a "People's Summit for Faithful Living."

Under the theme "At the Crossroads: Promise and Peril," participants will focus on the urgent task of being a faithful community of God amid the many challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. Deuteronomy 4:1-9 will be the theme text.

"The book of Deuteronomy is especially suited for use in such a summit," says Jack Suderman, general secretary of Mennonite Church Canada. "It is directed at God's people as they move into the land God has allowed them to possess, where they face such important questions as, Why does God work through peoplehood even when that peoplehood is not deserving? What does covenant mean and how does that inform our questions of faithfulness? What are the temptations of God's people in the land in which they live? Where do God's people find security as they live in the land and are tempted by wealth, power and ownership?"

These are the questions the summit will address through worship, study and discussion. Mennonite Church USA identified similar questions at its convention in San José, Calif., when it passed a resolution calling for "resources that help us live faithfully in Christlike ways, sometimes at odds with our national culture, acknowledging that no culture is either completely redeemed or completely fallen."

Ron Byler, associate executive director of Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, says, "We will be looking to further our work in response to our delegates with this upcoming event. For me, an important part of our theme is what it means to live as a contrast community."

Plenary worship speakers are Tom and Christine Sine of Seattle, April Yamasaki of Abbotsford, B.C., and Tom Yoder-Neufeld of Waterloo, Ont.

A variety of workshops and activities and time for visiting and recreation will round out the 2½-day event.

Dan Dyck

The planning team for the People's Summit includes, from left, Pam Peters-Pries, Jorge Vallejos, Iris de León-Hartshorn, Mildred Roth, Marlies Schaan, Karen Peters, Marlies Klassen, Karen Schellenberg and Dan Dyck (not shown).

The People's Summit was announced in July 2007 at the Mennonite Church USA biennial convention in San José and the Mennonite Church Canada annual delegate assembly in Abbotsford, B.C. The two denominations last met together at a joint convention in 2005 in Charlotte, N.C., where delegates strongly supported continuing to meet together.

The People's Summit will begin the evening of July 8 and continue through the evening of July 10.

Attendees are invited to make a vacation of the People's Summit and Manitoba attractions such as the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach, beautiful Whiteshell Provincial Park and the popular Winnipeg Folk Festival.

Information and registration is available at summit.mennoniteusa.org (for Mennonite Church USA) and at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/534 (for Mennonite Church Canada).

Mennonite Church Canada will hold its own separate delegate assembly at the same location July 7-8, just prior to the People's Summit, to address issues, business items, budgets and receive ministry reports.

Agenda items will include follow-up on the 2007 creation care and militarization discussions, interfaith dialogue and issues arising from the fall 2007 survey of current and former pastors.—*Joint release of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada*

AT THE CROSS ROADS

PROMISE & PERIL

Logo for the People's Summit July 8-10 in Winnipeg

Mission agencies discuss power, empire

Council of International Anabaptist Ministries gather for annual meeting.

Jon Bonk

Gi-dae Kim

Sixty-seven mission agency representatives struggled with Christianity, empire and consumerism at the Council of International Anabaptist Ministries (CIM).

CIM met near Pittsburgh Jan. 21-26 with the theme "Christlike Mission in a Post-Christendom World."

The keynote speakers, Jon Bonk and Gi-dae Kim, shared during the consultation sessions at the Gilmary Diocesan Center in addition to regional committee meetings and related meetings.

Bonk, an ordained Mennonite minister, is a Canadian living in the United States. He is the executive director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Conn., and editor of the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. His best-known book is *Missions and Money: Affluence as a Western Missionary Problem* (Orbis, 1991).

Kim is a veterinarian and co-founder of the Dandelion Community, which started in rural Korea more than 20 years ago. The Dandelion Community, a Christian community but not a denomination, bases its philosophy on the characteristics of the dandelion and advocates for a simple yet well-balanced lifestyle.

Kim shared about the group's development work in Cambodia since 2000 and the nongovernmental organization Neighbor of Cambodia.

Bonk's first session on Wednesday evening (Jan. 23), "Clash of Civilization: Followers of Jesus and Neo-Christendom," provided a history and analysis of the "blending of peaceable kingdom and powerful state."

"The mortal struggle for survival ... is not between Islam and Christianity. The greater struggle is between Jesus and nationalism," Bonk added.

He challenged CIM on how to work faithfully despite the West's sins of violence, consumerism, genocide, slavery, land-taking and more. The addiction the West has to violence in neo-Christendom is "just as complicated as getting out of slavery," he said.

The West's newer model of consumerism and the "good news of plenty" is not sustainable.

"This bothers us because we don't know what else to offer," Bonk said.

However, he said the Bible is clear: "When it comes to nations and empires, the writing is always on the wall," as earthly empires always eventually crumble.

A respondent to Bonk, Stanley Green, executive director of Mennonite Mission Network, provided reasons for hope: the impermanence of empires, the subversive memory of Jesus in the midst of power and individuals who serve the church as spiritual guides, such as Óscar Romero, Martin Luther King Jr. and Bartolomé de las Casas—as well as the resolution on national identity passed by Mennonite Church USA at San José 2007.

Including international voices: The group looked at a Regional Leadership Proposal (a way for CIM conversation to be expanded to include more international voices) during the business meeting.

The proposal reads: "Over the next five years ... we would focus on a different region, as defined by our regional committees ... a good number of partner participants from the region of focus would be invited to attend and participate in the consultation."

CIM members agreed for the Asia region to move forward with this, especially timely as 2009 is the centennial of Mennonite mission in China, but that an alternative will be found if this sort of regional gathering is not possible.

The group also discussed ways for CIM to include mission agencies that originate outside of the United States and Canada but work in North America. They moved to be proactive in inviting these groups to participate in consultation and consider membership.

In other business, CIM selected John F. Lapp of Mennonite Mission Network to serve as vice chair and moved to check the availability of a retreat center in Chicago for 2010's meeting.

CIM continues its search for a coordinator. Ann Campbell-Janz served as the interim coordinator this year.—*Anna Groff*

Council of Anabaptist International Ministries 2008 participants list

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission—2
Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary—1
Brethren in Christ World Mission—1
Mennonite Partners in China—2
Eastern Mennonite Missions—13
Evangelical Mennonite Conference—1
Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference—1
Mennonite Brethren Missions and Service International—2
Mennonite Central Committee—10
Mennonite Church Canada—5
Mennonite Economic Development Associates—1
Mennonite Mission Network—20
Rosedale Mennonite Missions—4
Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions—4

Group to Iran encounters no hostility

Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored group tours Iran for two weeks.

When a group sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee left for a two-week learning tour to Iran on Dec. 28, 2007, they weren't sure what to expect.

"I'd had some exposure to Iranians, but I expected we would experience at least some degree of unfriendliness, possibly hostility," James Cooper, one of the group members, said. "That was completely shattered."

Cooper, a Bloomington, Ind., resident, joined others who went on the trip—including Goshen, Ind., residents Bertha Beachy and Gwen Gustafson-Zook—in sharing their trip experiences Jan. 14 at The Depot in Goshen, just hours after arriving home.

While Cooper said the group did not encounter any form of hostility, "People asked us over and over why the [United States] and Christians hated them," he said.

Once the group members told the Iranian people that they wanted peace and good relations between the two countries, the Iranians appeared moved, and some even teared up, Cooper said.

Gustafson-Zook said she was fascinated to walk on ancient ground written about in the Old Testament, and it made her realize how young the United States is as a country.

She recalled a special time when the group gathered with Iranian people and sang what Mennonites know as "606" ("Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow.")

"Not only was it OK, it was welcome," she said. The Iranians were also present as the group sang "Come Walk With Us, the Journey Is Long," which Gustafson-Zook indicated was appropriate for the situation.

"The journey of understanding is long," she said. "It takes effort, but it can be done."

Bertha Beachy spent 25 years in Africa relating to Muslims (20 years as an English teacher), which is why she was so interested in going on the trip.

"I found it amazing the openness they had," she said. "It is important to have an exchange and the opportunity for dialogue."

Beachy said that as she hears the rhetoric increasing in America, she hopes that those who went on the trip can convey the openness they experienced in Iran.

"At 76, I would do it again," she said.

Wally Shellenberger, a Paoli, Ind., resident who went on the trip with his wife, Evelyn, said that unfortunately Americans have been "bombarded with disinformation" about Iran and the Iranian people.

Doug Hostetter

Evie Shellenberger gives a peace lamp to Ayatollah Ha'eri Shirazi in his office in Shiraz during the Mennonite Central Committee delegation to Iran.

"Iranians had nothing to do with 9/11," he said. "How in the world does the media and our government manage to link this stuff to Iran?" he asked.

"That is not to say they are not capable of it. If we were to send missiles into Iran … we could turn many friends into enemies," he said.

"The [United States] has a huge self-interest of defusing this culture of fear that we live with," Shellenberger said.

Gustafson-Zook shared Shellenberger's sentiments.

"I think all Congresspeople should be required to visit the country they want to bomb before they bomb it," she said. Once the people of that country become your friends, there would be a lot less bombs dropped, she said.

All members of the group indicated they would be interested in talking with local Congressional representatives about the trip and experiences.

I'd had some exposure to Iranians, but I expected we would experience at least some degree of unfriendliness, possibly hostility. That was completely shattered.—James Cooper

"What we experienced was only part of the picture," Gustafson-Zook said. "But we would want to paint the picture we saw so our elected officials can benefit."

In addition to Beachy and Gustafson-Zook, Goshen residents David Cortright and Goshen College students Paul Shetler and Rebecca Fast went on the trip.—*Tara Layne,* The Goshen News

Relief funds needed as Kenya crisis rises

Eastern Mennonite Missions releases $3,000 in emergency funding.

As the political impasse over a disputed presidential election continues, banned protest rallies deteriorated into running battles in Kenya. Numerous people have been shot, and the scheduled opening of school has been postponed.

Clair Good, Eastern Mennonite Missions' representative to Africa, and Beth, his wife, arrived in Kenya last month to assess the situation and show solidarity with national church leaders and EMM workers during this crisis.

The Goods have met with all EMM workers in Nairobi, including Nevin and Barbara Kraybill at the Mennonite Guest House; Brent and Katrina Siegrist at Rosslyn Academy; Mike and Cindy Brislen, involved in Somali ministries and at Nairobi International School of Theology; and a Youth Evangelism Service team: Ben Yutzy, Melissa Eby, Monica Stoltzfus and Becky Jordan. All EMM missionaries in Kenya are safe.

Good is sending an urgent call for relief funds to buy food and other necessities for the up to 500,000 (by U.N. estimates) internally displaced people across the country, many of whom are children.

"The situation is dire. We could use $100,000 in emergency funding, and it would still be a drop in the bucket," Good says. "We must stand with our Mennonite and other church partners here who are reaching out with compassion to their communities and 'enemy' tribes. It is important that relief aid is distributed fairly and not according to tribal alliances.

"Church members are finding it hard to find food, as employment has stopped for many, and the price of food, if available, has increased drastically.

"Mennonite leaders are discussing ways they can learn from this disaster and teach the members how to respond in times of violence and hatred," Good says.

David Shunkur, a Mennonite leader in Olepolos, west of Nairobi, reported that the camp for displaced people in their community is struggling because of sickness and heavy rains. In the same community, a protester was shot, which enraged the community; a local church helped leaders appease the people to avoid further violence.

Joash Osiro, a Mennonite bishop, told Good that violence forced him and his family to move from their home in Nairobi three times. They are now living with his in-laws. They are thankful to be alive but left all their belongings in Nairobi.

Mike Brislen, an EMM worker who teaches at Nairobi International School of Theology, says the rumors are rampant, and as tension rises, people become hardened in their views and begin to echo their respective party lines.

In western Kenya, the heartland of the 7,000-member Mennonite church, many people from groups supporting incumbent President Kibaki have taken refuge in police compounds; some opposition party members threatened to storm the compounds and kill everyone inside. Many of these people are fleeing to Uganda or trying to return to tribal heartland they left generations ago in search of farmland and business opportunities across Kenya. There are severe fuel and food shortages.

Brislen says that in Nairobi, after the election of the speaker of parliament this week, some opposition party supporters celebrated by burning down an African Inland Church in the Mathare slums. The pastor of the church is a student at NIST, where Brislen teaches.

Brislen says that on Jan. 13, Ibrahim Omondi, pastor of Dove Fellowship in Nairobi, which they attend, spoke of the need for repentance and peace, as did many other pastors in Kenya.

"Representatives of five ethnic groups confessed the sins of their people and prayed for peace and reconciliation," Brislen says. "I was asked to confess and pray on behalf of the Wazungu (white people).

Brislen notes that while the situation in Kenya has been serious, claims of genocide and ethnic cleansing seem to be exaggerated. But without compromise from the two political leaders and their parties, the potential for chaos and civil war are present, and hope is dimming that a peaceful solution will be found.

From other parts of the country stories from EMM partner churches trickle in.

Pastor Caleb Owuonda reported that when members of Mathare Mennonite Church in the Nairobi slums gathered for worship Jan. 6, a gang of armed thugs that had been burning homes and businesses in the Mathare slum terrorized the church, demanding 1,500 Kenyan shillings. The church gave all it had—500 shillings collected in the morning offering—and were grateful the church was spared another day.

So far, EMM has released $3,000 in emergency funding, which is being distributed through partner churches to supply the emergency needs of displaced people, but Good says: "The needs are great. We are talking with national church leaders about how to respond further to this catastrophe as more funds become available."—*Jewel Showalter of Eastern Mennonite Missions*

We must stand with our Mennonite and other church partners here who are reaching out with compassion to their communities and 'enemy' tribes.
—Clair Good

Thief seeks scrap metal but finds faith

Construction project chaplain offers job that leads to Filpino's conversion.

The thief entered the Faith Academy in Manila, Philippines, construction site for scrap metal. Instead he found faith.

Ricky Silvario* lives in a squatter's village near the academy, a school in Manila primarily for the children of mission workers. For Silvario, and for others seeking to feed their families, the current project to build a school auditorium was an attractive place to steal from, especially after a twisted, unlocked gate offered easy access to the construction workers' barracks.

In late October 2007, Rufo Cabungcal, the construction project chaplain known as "Chaplain Pong," found Silvario on site, scavenging roofing materials and scrap iron to sell on the streets. In broad daylight, Cabungcal confronted him.

Silvario would not relent, leaving with the stolen goods after Cabungcal refused to resort to violence following a vehement conversation.

Cabungcal reported his experience to Tad Wulliman, project manager for construction and a Mennonite Mission Network associate, and Clarence Torkelson, an electrician serving through Wycliffe Associates.

Torkelson's response: "We need to give this man a job."

With support from his supervisors, Cabungcal went in search of Silvario. When he found the man, he offered him a job as an electrician.

Silvario accepted the job. As Cabungcal helped him fill out the official application, Silvario also accepted Christ.

Wulliman says Silvario's conversion, while dramatic, is not necessarily unusual. It is a symptom of how the academy's ongoing construction work has been organized.

"For years, we have always given the workers the opportunity to be exposed to the salvation message, and the cooperation and attitudes have always been excellent," Wulliman says.

That message—unusual in an overwhelmingly nominal Catholic culture—is evident on the job site, according to the company bosses Wulliman works with.

"The workers have a better attitude, work harder, are more pleasant, more cooperative, happier, more content," Wulliman says. "For many of these men, the exposure of the pure gospel of salvation at Faith Academy is the only time in their lives they would have ever heard of such a life-changing message."

Wulliman hired Cabungcal to serve as chaplain in early 2006; he initially also worked as a project carpenter but soon was ministering full-time.

Barb Wulliman

From left, Chaplain Rufo (Pong) Cabungcal, Ricky Silvario* and Gary Reyes* in Manila, Philippines. (*pseudonyms)

Cabungcal and his wife, Janet, live in a small shanty among the barracks with the construction workers, hosting morning Bible studies, worship services, free meals every other Saturday, entertainment and what he calls basketball evangelism—a way to connect with workers on the court.

In an interview with Sandy Musgrave, serving at Faith Academy with New Tribes Mission, Cabungcal said he sometimes sits with workers on his roof after their shifts. He often answers questions about the Bible, which many of the workers, despite their Catholic backgrounds, have rarely opened.

"We talk from 9 o'clock in the evening until 3 o'clock sometimes. They are sharing their problems, sharing their experiences," Cabungcal said.

Wulliman says much of the construction projects will allow the academy to connect to middle- and upper-class members of the community. Cabungcal's presence, and the work itself, allows a connection to the working class that has formed a faith community.

Of the nearly 70 workers in the barracks, about 20 have professed belief in Christ, Cabungcal said, including Silvario, who now works under the only other professed Christian electrician on the crew. Wulliman says Silvario's family is now coming to weekend worship services, and Silvario continues to explore his newfound faith in God among a growing community of peers and mentors.

Tad and Barbara Wulliman are Mission Network associates in the Philippines, working with Mennonite Mission Network and Wycliffe Bible Translators.—*Ryan Miller of Mennonite Mission Network*

**Ricky Silvario is a pseudonym.*

Dutch send medical supplies to Tanzania

150 hospital beds, Landcruiser move Shariti hospital 'from struggle to hope.'

Photo provided

Arrival in Shirati of the 150 hospital beds sent by Doopsgezind WereldWerk

A fourth 40-foot container of medical supplies and hospital equipment from Dutch Mennonites arrived in Tanzania in late December 2007. Doopsgezind WereldWerk, the Dutch Mennonite Organization for Solidarity and Peace (www.dgwereldwerk.nl), sent the shipment on to African Mennonite hospitals in Shirati and Mugumu in January.

Dutch Mennonite churches started raising funds for hospitals in Tanzania early in 2005. In April 2007, they shipped 150 hydraulic hospital beds in three 40-foot containers. When Dutch Mennonites revisited the Shirati hospital in October 2007, they observed a more positive spirit. The "Friends of Shirati," older missionaries from North America, had become more involved again. The Dutch heard many times that the beds made the difference in moving the hospitals from struggle to hope. They did not expect the impact would be so big, say the Dutch visitors.

Another gift in 2007 from the Dutch Mennonites was a Landcruiser to solve the transport problems, as the Shirati hospital did not have any vehicle.

Doopsgezind WereldWerk, in conjunction with the Tanzanian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, supports the project that aims to provide all-inclusive home care, mother and child health care and an outpatient department in an area where there is nothing. Professional staff will be paid by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

A company they named "Bethsaida," from the biblical story in John 5, has been established to manage the project. It has three co-directors: Elisabeth de Quant, general manager of the Intercultural Nursing Home De Schildershoek in The Hague, the Netherlands; Musuto M. Chirangi, Tanzanian director of the Mennonite Hospital in Mugumu, and Jumanne Magiri, general secretary of Kanisa la Mennonite Tanzania (KMT, the Tanzanian Mennonite Church).

Doopsgezind WereldWerk, with financial support from Dutch Mennonites, will donate funds for the building and equipment and take responsibility during the years to come for this new branch of health care, including home-based care.

The Minister of Health is interested in this "pilot project," which he sees as a model for the whole country. He would like to come to the Netherlands. The Dutch Mennonites want him to come so they can put him in contact with the Dutch government and with one of their Dutch home-care organizations.—*Elisabeth de Quant for Mennonite World Conference*

Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Hybrid auto discount

Because we believe in stewardship and care of the environment, we will give a 1% discount on the interest rate for a loan used to purchase a vehicle equipped with a combined electric-gasoline engine.

***Hybrid auto discount:** Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Subscribe to
TheMennonite
at **www.themennonite.org**
or call **1-800-790-2498**

Oregon farmer joins tour at U.S. border

Discovers trade agreements, agriculture policies create desperation in Mexico

Silvia Rios

Members of a tour to the Mexico-U.S. border pray at the wall dividing the two countries.

An 11-day tour along the United States-Mexico border was designed to educate about immigration and trade issues. The experience changed one participant's entire worldview.

From his Salem, Ore., farm, Stan Steffen had watched the immigrants come for years. Many came from the south, working for low wages for the local agriculture industry, allowing large farms to drive up area land prices higher than family farmers could afford.

"I had my own feelings about immigrants that weren't very positive," Steffen says.

The third day of the November 2007 migration and trade learning tour in southern Arizona and northern Mexico found Steffen and nine other Anabaptists on the south side of a steel wall marking the border between Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico, and Douglas, Ariz. In his hand were slips of paper with the names of migrants who had died crossing the border. For 30 minutes after reading a litany, they stood silently, thought about what they had learned about trade imbalances and injustices, and prayed.

"The more I read and get involved and get interested in the subject, I see we had the wool pulled over our eyes," Steffen says. "Our agriculture programs here in the U.S., our subsidies, have a lot to do with why [migrants] are coming up here."

Since Steffen's return to Oregon, he has spoken out in support of immigrant workers and educated those around him about the reasons for the increase in immigration from the south.

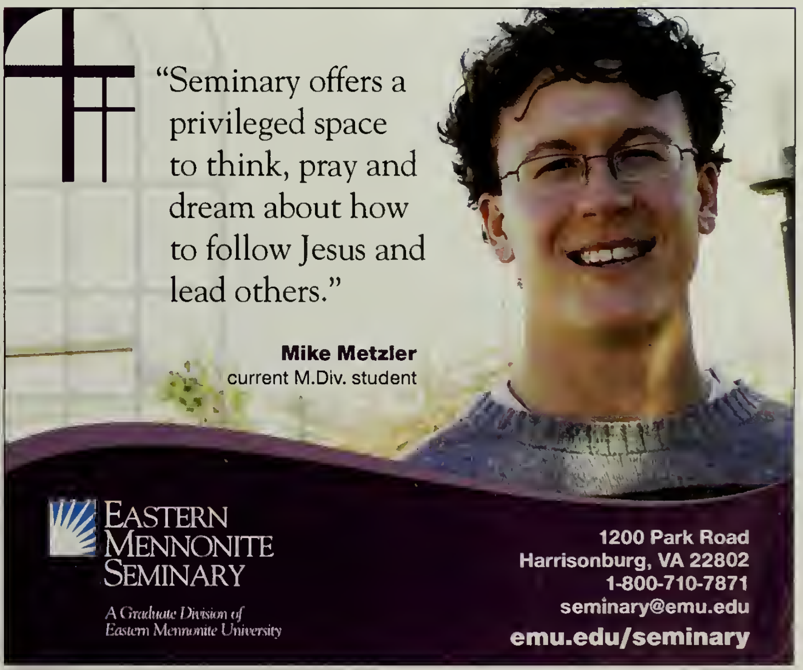
The border tour was co-sponsored by Mennonite Mission Network's Peace and Justice Support Network, West Coast Mennonite Central Committee and MCC Great Lakes. BorderLinks, a 21-year-old experiential education ministry operating out of Tucson, Ariz, also provided staff and other resources.

MCC's Jodi Read, planned the itinerary in conjunction with Borderlinks, which included meetings with fair-trade merchants and experiential learning about how trade agreements have crippled parts of the Mexican economy by sending cheap, subsidized produce south. Read also helped promote and lead the tour.

At Casa Misericordia (House of Mercy), the BorderLinks office in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, BorderLinks-Mexico director Francisco Trujillo told the group that the imports and agreements with the U.S. government have forced Mexican farmers to grow crops such as coffee for export instead of producing goods that could feed Mexican families. The resulting imbalances create a need for jobs, making northward immigration and the low-paying jobs in local, U.S.-owned maquilas (factories) attractive.

The more I read and get involved . . . I see we had the wool pulled over our eyes.—Stan Steffen

More information is available at the PSJN site: www.peace.mennolink.org.—*Ryan Miller for Mennonite Mission Network*


"Seminary offers a privileged space to think, pray and dream about how to follow Jesus and lead others."

Mike Metzler
current M.Div. student

EASTERN MENNONITE SEMINARY
A Graduate Division of Eastern Mennonite University

1200 Park Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
1-800-710-7871
seminary@emu.edu
emu.edu/seminary

CALENDAR

Worldwide Klopfenstein reunion, June 20-21, **Grabill Park Pavilion, Grabill, Ind**. All Klopfenstein and extended families welcome. Bring family history, books, pictures and genealogy records. For more information contact Tom Klopfenstein at TomKlop@comcast.net or Lynn Klopfenstein at Lynn1905@charter.net.

WORKERS

Burkholder, Timothy, was licensed for his work as interim executive conference minister for Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Jan. 6.

Cox, Karen, was ordained as pastor at Boulder Mennonite Church, Boulder, Colo., on Oct. 7, 2007.

Good, Marlin, was installed as interim pastor of East Holbrook Mennonite Church, Cheraw, Colo., on Oct. 21, 2007 and licensed for ministry at Albuquerque Mennonite Church, Albuquerque, N.M., on Nov. 4, 2007.

Headrick McCrae, Betsy, was installed and licensed as pastor of Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakewood, Colo., on Sept. 23, 2007.

Kaiser, Jerry, was installed as pastor at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen, Idaho, on Dec. 6, 2007.

Lengacher, Andrea, was installed and licensed as associate pastor at First Mennonite Church of Denver, Denver, Colo., on Dec. 2, 2007.

Owens, Arnold "Arnie," was installed as pastor at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling, Ill, on Dec. 2, 2007.

Scoville, Gordon, began service as interim pastor at Filer Mennonite Church, Filer, Idaho, in Oct. 2007.

Thoedpraiphanawan, Pastor Komin, was installed and licensed as pastor of Hmong Mennonite Church, Westminster, Colo., on Sept. 22, 2007.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bachman, Levi Brandon, Nov. 21, 2007, to Brandon Bachman and Sheri Reeder, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

Carr, Josiah Charles, Jan. 15, to Robert and Julie Dale Carr, Denver, Colo.

Griffin, Elyse Louise, Dec. 26, 2007, to John and Jill Griffin, Hesston, Kan.

Mummau, Carter Nelson, Dec. 19, 2007, to Chris and Judy Geissinger Mummau, East Waterford, Pa.

Neff, Alison Groveen, Oct. 17, 2007, to Todd and Chrissy Haines Neff, Stephens City, Va.

Plank, Tekoa Clare, Jan. 3, to Ezra and Emily Schackmann Plank, Iowa City, Iowa.

Powell, Sophia Lynn, Nov. 9, 2007, to Kurt and Christy Lauck Powell, Bluffton, Ohio.

Schweitzer, Rianna Catherine, Nov. 1, 2007, to Bradley and Christine Kaufman Schweitzer, Hesston, Kan.

Snyder, Caden Russell, Dec. 28, 2007, to Ben and Shawn Leaman Snyder, Apple Creek, Ohio.

Swartzendruber, Kaitlyn Estella, Dec. 15, 2007, to Troy and Tina Osborn Swartzendruber, Bremen, Ind.

Yoder Stutzman, Annika Grace, Jan. 9, to Rod and Barb Yoder Stutzman, Denver, Colo.

MARRIAGES

Burkett/Roth: Katie Burkett, Houghton, Iowa, and Clint Roth, Wayland, Iowa, Dec. 19, 2007, in Nevada.

Davidhizar/Heinz: Troy Davidhizar, Wakarusa, Ind., and Erica Heinz, Goshen, Ind., Dec. 29, 2007, at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Schlabach/Yoder: Brian Schlabach, Denver, Colo., and Anna Yoder, Denver, Dec. 22, 2007, at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

DEATHS

Arndt, Doug E., 55, North Canton, Ohio, died Jan. 8. Spouse: Becky Horning Arndt. Parents: Fred and Arlene Arndt. Children: Jamie Arndt, Caitlin Arndt; stepchildren: Melissa, Monica, Kevin, Daniel. Funeral: Jan. 12 at Reed Funeral Home, North Canton.

Badertscher, John Frederick, 71, Bluffton, Ohio, died Jan. 5. Parents: William and Elma Locher Badertscher. Funeral: Jan. 13 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Benner, Kathryn A. Alderfer, 88, Earlington, Pa., died Dec. 7, 2007. Spouse: Marvin Y. Benner (deceased). Parents: Howard and Florence Wambold Alderfer. Children: Gerald, Kenneth, Arlin, Carolyn Benner, Christine Stutzman; 12 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Souderton Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.

Betzelberger, H. Robert, 82, Delavan, Ill., died Jan. 9. Spouse: Betty Garber Christophel Betzelberger. Spouse: Billy Jean Potts (deceased). Parents: Harry and Naomi Webb Betzelberger. Children: Bob, Loren Christophel, Kathy Smith, Sheila Cobb; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 18 at Hopedale Mennonite Church, Hopedale, Ill.

ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE

ENGAGED · EVANGELICAL · ANABAPTIST

New concentrations: business, education, and youth ministries

Christ-centered community

Spanish language cross-cultural term

Credits that transfer

Accredited education at affordable prices

SMALL COLLEGE, BIG IMPACT

www.rosedale.edu • 740-857-1311 • Rosedale, Ohio

Brunk, Don Wendell, 72, Harrisonburg, Va., died Jan. 4. Spouse: Patricia A. Brennerman Brunk. Parents: Orvin Daniel and Mary Coakley Brunk. Children: Kenneth J., Alan C.; one grandson; two step-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 7 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Egli, Thelma Susan Wenger, 89, Hesston, Kan., and Denver, Colo., died Dec. 21, 2007. Spouse: Donald Earl Egli (deceased). Parents: Jonas and Anna Loucks Wenger. Children: LaDonna Faye Gaeddert, Meredith Ann Egli, Judy Lynn Yoder; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 30 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Eshbach, Charles, 93, Ronks, Pa., died Nov. 13, 2007. Spouse: Verna D. Keagy Eshbach (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Selena Charles Eshbach. Children: Jay C., John R., Mark E., Dale C.; five grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 16 at Stumptown Mennonite Church, Bird-in-Hand, Pa.

Gierman, Karl Elden, 97, Bluffton, Ohio, died Jan. 8. Spouse: Ada M. Steiner Gierman (deceased). Parents: John and Emilie Paul Gierman. Children: Irlene Sue Glenn, Miriam Morton; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; three step-great-grandchildren; two step-great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Hathaway, Katherine "Scott" Crockett, 49, Richmond, Va., died Jan. 1. Spouse: Edward G. Hathaway. Parents: Vernon Harris and Geraldine S. Dameron Crockett. Child: Benjamin M. Funeral: Jan. 5 at First Mennonite Church of Richmond.

Hershberger, Bernard M., 83, Wellman, Iowa, died Jan. 12. Spouse: Neva Lou Jantz Hershberger. Parents: Paul and Nettie Miller Hershberger. Children: Bernard J., Gloria Hershberger, Rita Trimpe; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 17 at Wellman Mennonite Church.

Hershberger, Lois Irene Diller, 82, Hesston, Kan., died Nov. 20, 2007, of a malignant brain tumor. Spouse: Glenn Leroy Hershberger (deceased). Parents: Jacob R. and Grace Darling Cooprider Diller. Children: Glenna Joy Lowry; two step-grandchildren; one step-great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 24 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Isaak, Laura Warkentin, 95, Reedley, Calif., died Dec. 23, 2007. Spouse: James Isaak (deceased). Parents: Isaac and Kathe Wilmsen Warkentin. Children: Virginia Carlson, Robert Isaak, Dathleen Rothchild; 12 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 31 at Cairns Funeral Home, Reedley.

Mast, Wilma Donetta Troyer, 83, Kinross, Iowa, died Jan. 14. Children: Rita Fowler, Rollin, Donna Mast; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 18 at Wellman Mennonite Church, Wellman, Iowa.

Miller, Alvin R., 90, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Nora Nissley Miller. Parents: Roman E. and Mattie Yoder Miller. Funeral: Jan. 15 at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind.

Pate, Robert Jesse "Bob," Jr., 83, Richmond, Va., Jan. 7. Spouse: Lois Shenk Pate (deceased). Parents: Robert J. and Myrtis Phillips Pate. Children: Valerie Wermuth, Robert J. Pate III. Funeral: Jan. 11 at First Mennonite Church of Richmond.

Pullman, LaVina Pullman, 82, Freeman, S.D., died Dec. 29, 2007. Spouse: Paul P. Pullman (deceased). Parents: Dave and Mary Gross Pullman. Children: Judy Bittner, Randy, Ron, LeRoy, Karen Bartling; 19 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 3 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Reil, Martha Roth, 88, Colorado Springs, Colo., died Jan. 6 of pulmonary fibrosis. Spouse: Delmer Reil (deceased). Parents: Nick and Ada Stutzman Roth. Children: Eugene, Ruth Ballentine, Keith, Wanda Nisbeth; nine grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 11 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Colorado Springs.

Rodeheffer, Elnor Locher, 99, Bluffton, Ohio, died Dec. 5, 2007, of a stroke. Spouse: Paul W. Rodeheffer (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Dora Hilty Locher. Children: Jonathan, Timothy; two granddaughters; two great-grandsons. Memorial service: Jan. 12 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Roth, Bernice Steckly, 89, Wayland, Iowa, died Jan. 1, following a lengthy illness. Spouse: Gilbert F. Roth (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Lydia Leichty Steckly. Children: Lynn G., Rodrick D., Karen Swartzendruber; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 5 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Roupp, Stanley Milford, 82, Hesston, Kan., died Jan. 7. Spouse: Roselena Ruth Willems Roupp. Parents: John and Lillie Balmer Roupp. Children: Valerie Helser, Sherry Jordan, Janelle Diller, Patrice Dunbar; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 15 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Waltner, James H., 76, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 18, 2007, of cancer. Spouse: Lenore Pankratz Waltner. Parents: Henry and Ida Kaufman Waltner. Children: Rachel Goossen, Tim, JoAn Thieszen; three grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 30 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Warner, Philip Charles, 92, Iowa City, Iowa, died Jan. 1 of prostate cancer. Spouse: Eleanor Warner (deceased). Parents: Clayton and Cora Mildred Wright Warner. Children: Margalea Warner. Memorial service: Jan. 5 at First Mennonite Church of Iowa City.

Wiebe, Nathan Paul Krueger, 2 hours, Waterloo, Ontario, died Dec. 19, 2007, in his parents' arms. Parents: Colin and Jennie Wiebe. Siblings: Naomi Wiebe, Joshua Wiebe. Memorial service: Dec. 22 at Waterloo North Mennonite Church.

Wismer, Mary A., 74, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 5. Parents: Leroy S. and Alice Y. Alderfer Wismer. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Yoder, Mildred Louise Clemens, 78, Souderton, Pa., died Nov. 9, 2007, of brain cancer. Spouse: Henry P Yoder. Parents: Raymond S. and Esther Moyer Clemens. Children: Allan, Anita Rusk, Christina Yoder, David; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 15 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

Specializing in web development
and customized software
The Mennonite
http://www.themennonite.org/
TheMennonite
Home
The Magazine
Blogs
For Discussion
Subscriptions
LIGHTSKY
www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

Eastern Mennonite University invites applications for faculty openings beginning Fall 2008.

Voice: ***Three-quarter to full-time continuing faculty position in voice***. Doctorate preferred, master's degree required. Performance experience expected. Ability to work collaboratively. The new faculty member will teach voice at the university level and other music courses as needed, according to individual's strengths. These courses could include directing the University Chorale and Opera or Musical Theater Scenes course.

Theater: ***Full-time, continuing faculty position in theater***. Ph.D. in theater preferred, MFA or master's in theater required. University teaching or professional experience required. Primary responsibilities include serving as department chair, teaching theater history courses, as well as other courses in areas of expertise and interest, and directing a departmental production.

Responsibilities for each position also include student advising, university service and ongoing scholarship. Salary and rank determined by education and experience.

EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist/Mennonite Christian faith practices. Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Marie S. Morris, Vice President and Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, or email to ugdean@emu.edu. Visit www.emu.edu online. Application review begins immediately. EMU reserves the right to fill the positions at any time or keep the positions open. People who bring diversity are encouraged to apply. EOE.

Parish Resource Center seeks ***president*** for national organization that serves congregations by training, coaching and equipping members for leadership and service. Job description, qualifications and application process online at parishresourcecenter.org.

Mennonite Mission Network seeks a ***bilingual writer*** to assist with news stories, brochures and power point presentations produced in Spanish and English. Also edit and proofread Spanish-language publications like *Prayer Vine* and *Missio Dei*. This person will be a committed Christian, active in a congregation, and have knowledge of the Hispanic Mennonite Church in the U.S. Proven communication skills in English and Spanish with a bachelor's degree in communication, journalism or a related field is required. For more information, see Staff Opportunities at www.MennoniteMission.net or call Linda Krueger at 574-523-3009.

Director of music: **North Goshen Mennonite Church**, a bicultural Hispanic-Anglo congregation in Goshen, Ind., is seeking a qualified person for .15 FTE position leading worship music: congregational singing and instrumental/vocal groups. Pay commensurate with experience and education. Contact LuAnn Steury, search chair, 574-831-4905.

Mennonite Mission Network seeks a ***Web content manager*** to develop and manage content for the Mennonite Mission Network public Web site, extranet and intranet sites. This person will be a committed Christian, active in a congregation and have good understanding of communication theory and strategies. Proven skills in writing and editing with a bachelor's degree in graphic design, e-commerce, communication, marketing or computer science is required. For more information, see Staff Opportunities at www.MennoniteMission.net or call Linda Krueger at 574-523-3009.

Bethel Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio, seeks ***pastor*** to re-energize graying congregation, full-time/part/time by vocational open options, contact pastor search committee: dlandis002@neo.rr.com.

CMU

www.cmu.ca

500 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB | R3P 2N2

Assistant Professor of Music Therapy

Canadian Mennonite University invites applications or nominations for a tenure-track faculty position in Music Therapy commencing as early as August 1, 2008.

Please view the full advertisement at **www.cmu.ca** or contact Dr. Harry Huebner, V.P. and Academic Dean, at **hhuebner@cmu.ca** for more information.

Processing of candidates will begin immediately, and will continue until the position is filled.

Local people serving the insurance needs of Mennonites and Brethren in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

For information about home, auto, farm, church, or business insurance find a Goodville agent near you at goodville.com or 1-800-448-4622.

Goodville
Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Highland Retreat celebrates 50 years in 2008! All former staff (summer and year-round) and board members are invited to a ***reunion weekend***, June 20-22, 2008. See www.highlandretreat.org or call 540-852-3226 for details.

Hesston College seeks a ***resident director*** for women's residence hall. A student life team member, the resident director provides leadership and oversight for operation of Hesston College's women's dormitory. This resident director role is a part-time position during the school year with summers off. The successful candidate will be a role model and mentor for students; select, train, and supervise student staff; and assist in enforcement of campus lifestyle standards. Qualifications include strong Christian faith, commitment to the Mennonite Church and to Hesston College, leadership ability, and listening and relational skills. Bachelor's degree or higher preferred. Apply by resumé to Lamar Roth, Dean of Students, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; e-mail lamarr@hesston.edu; or call 620-327-8235 for information. Review of applicants begins March 1 and continues until the position is filled. EOE.

Salem Mennonite Church, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alta. (45 minutes southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0; fax 780-662-0106; email cgfen@telus.net.

Community Mennonite Church, in the heart of downtown Harrisonburg, Va., a 34-year-old congregation with a worshiping body of approximately 250, seeks a ***full-time lead pastor*** to serve with the pastoral team in providing leadership and pastoral ministry. We are in search of applicants with significant experience and strengths in preaching, worship leading and spiritual leadership. Please contact the chair of the search committee by Feb. 15. Teresa Boshart Yoder, email tbyoder@rhcc.com or mail 1066 Smith Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; phone 540-432-6467, home.

Associate pastor (full-time or part-time) with a focus on youth ministry is being sought for **Covenant Community Fellowship** in Lansdale, Pa.; www.cc-fellowship.org. Congregation of 170 was a church planting begun in 1986. Forty junior- and senior-high youth. Contact dennisgehman@comcast.net.

Goshen College business department faculty openings:

Assistant professor of business beginning August 2008. This full-time, tenure track faculty position is supported by an endowed chair and provides one course release for scholarship each year. Teaching responsibilities include courses in marketing, management and other business-related topics, depending upon the applicant's areas of expertise. Coordinate and direct the business internship program and serve as an advisor to business majors. Ph.D is preferred, master's degree required in a business-related discipline. Professional experience in business is also required.

Director of entrepreneurship position to begin in August 2008. This full-time position involves both teaching and leadership of the business department's center for business and entrepreneurship education. Primary responsibilities include directing the Entrepreneurship Learning Center (ELC) and teaching from two to four courses in entrepreneurship and related business areas. Secondary responsibilities include directing the family business program and ASSETS Elkhart County, an entrepreneurship training program for business owners. Graduate degree in a business-related discipline and professional experience in business is required.

For application instructions, see position announcement at www.goshen.edu/employment Web site. Goshen College is an EEO/AA employer seeking a diverse faculty and staff.

Menno Haven Retirement Communities, Chambersburg, PA, invites applications for the position of full-time ***chaplain*** to be added to the present pastoral care staff of three chaplains. Menno Haven is a growing continuing care retirement community with 1100 residents and 550 staff persons spread over three neighboring campuses. Candidates should be ordained and credentialed as a Mennonite minister, with pastoral or chaplaincy experience and Clinical Pastoral Education training. Contact Ray Geigley, Executive Manager for Pastoral Care Services at rgeigley@mennohaven.org or 717-261-2512 for job description and further information.

Conrad Grebel University College, a residence and teaching facility affiliated with the University of Waterloo, seeks a married couple for the position of ***campus hosts*** (formerly known as senior residents), beginning approximately June 1. The role involves living in an apartment in the college's residence building and supervising the college during nonbusiness hours. Rent and utilities are free in exchange for performance of duties. Applicants should be mature, responsible and able to relate to a broad range of people, especially students in residence. If interested contact E. Paul Penner, CGUC Operations Manager, at 519-885-0220, ext. 24231 or by email at eppenner@uwaterloo.ca. Application deadline is Feb. 15.

New book: "Amish Soul on Ice" by John N. Keim available now at amazon.com or books.com; "an Amish boy's slide from his past."

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.20 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2008 TOURS

SPRINGTIME CRUISE FROM AMSTERDAM TO PARIS (March 22 -April 2)
EXPERIENCE SOUTH AMERICA (March 28-April 11)
VISIT "TRANSYLVANIA EMERGING" - ROMANIA AND HUNGARY (April 21-May 2) - with MEDA
MOSCOW AND SIBERIA (May 24-June 4)
ISRAEL/PALESTINE WITH AMBS (May 25-June 4)
MENNONITE GREAT TREK ALONG THE SILK ROAD (May 25-June 9)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 4-16)
ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES (June 25-July 7)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 7-20)
EXPLORING SWISS-GERMAN FAMILY ROOTS IN EUROPE (August 25-September 7)
MENNONITE STORY IN POLAND WITH PETER KLASSEN (September 16-24)
CHINA AND A YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)
TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)
FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF MOSES (November 2-14)

2009 TOURS

CHURCHES AND SAFARIS IN KENYA AND TANZANIA (February 9-20)
EXPLORE THE WORLD OF PAUL WITH TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
6 MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE TOURS (July) call or check web site

2010 TOURS

CHECK WEB SITE FOR TOURS INCLUDING OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

TOURMAGINATION DISCOVERY & FELLOWSHIP

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada
Reg. #50014322
2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

Church as family: worrying and celebrating

Michael A. King is pastor of Spring Mount (Pa.) Mennonite Church, publisher of Cascadia Publishing House LLC and editor of *DreamSeeker* magazine.

A generation ago my missionary parents turned our large family into a touring band singing Bill Gaither's "I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God." Ever since then, I, like many of us, have had to work not to see family and church as interchangeable.

That's good. Scripture itself (Romans 8:15-17, Galatians 4:5, and more) tells us that through Christ we become adopted sons and daughters of God, hence also each other's brothers and sisters.

It's also bad. Family is a central New Testament image of the church. But there are so many more images to enrich us: In his *Images of the Church in the New Testament*, Paul S. Minear famously claimed to have found 96.

One key way God works is precisely through those brothers and sisters in the family of God.

Then blend the family image with a family-like structure, as do so many small congregations, and disentangling church and family really gets hard. So I both celebrate the image of church as family and worry about it. Let me just sample the smorgasbord of factors that may be pondered, starting with reasons to worry.

Reasons to worry: A problem with small churches that are families is this: The cozy family church can also be the cramped family nest. You crawl over each other like baby birds and risk seeing that tiny space as the only world there is. Everybody knows everybody else's business, and whoever misses being in this loop or that feels devalued and excluded. The church as family can become the nest that traps us instead of a launching pad into God's great world out there.

A second problem is that family churches are wrapped in a force field. Walk as a stranger into a family-style church and reel like I do when I forget the sliding-glass door is closed and crash right into it. The family church force field can be invisible, but it's there. It's made up of all the things you have to know, all the rituals and memories you have to have shared, all the rules ("This is the way we do family.") you have to have mastered to belong to the gang.

Reasons to celebrate: Still there are reasons to celebrate church as family. One is that for many of us, family equals safe. In an ever-complex culture that changes at ever more dazzling speeds, the small family church is a haven. Here the impersonal hordes, the cool but intimidating styles of mass media, in which all humans except us are beautiful, the indigestible masses of information hurled at us by ever-evolving technologies, are tamed. Here, as on that long-gone TV show *Cheers*, they know your name. They know your foibles and your triumphs. Here, as in any family, they're supposed to take you as you are, just because you're family.

Another reason to celebrate church as family is that it offers amazing potential for healing. Many of us are underparented, overparented, nonparented. Many of us come from broken families, hurting or hurtful families, families that have disowned us or from whom our addictions or poor choices have severed us. Church as family gives us a fresh start. Here we again become children, this time of a more reliable parent than any human one, and gain new brothers and sisters who, though flawed, are at their best committed to helping carry our burdens.

Repeatedly as pastor I've watched with awe as people who seem broken nearly beyond repair enter this new family and change. Often the change is even dazzlingly physical, as those whose wounds have undermined even bodies experience a reweaving at every level of being. In such cases I've frequently been involved as pastor but not enough to account for the radicality of the transformations. Something more profound is going on. Partly, it's the work of God. But one key way God works is precisely through those brothers and sisters in the family of God.

A snapshot of reasons to worry or celebrate can be seen in worship-style tendencies. The family church may miss treasures offered by worship viewed, for instance, as unfolding within the image of Jesus as the vine and the church as his branches. Such worship may treasure silence, order, the minimizing of commotion outside to help still the storm inside.

In contrast, like biological families at reunions, the family church is often informal, noisy, fun loving. People hug and cry out welcomes. Children scurry. We're so glad to be together. Can't you just feel it? This can trap. It can also heal.

Let's be part of the family of God and of branches on the vine, of the body of Christ, of the royal priesthood, the holy nation, of the Holy City to which all God's people stream from every nest.

Welcome to the Wisdom of the World and Its Meaning for You by Joan Chittister (Eerdmans, 2007, $20) presents the insights of others from different cultures through history who have grappled with the same kind of life questions that plague us here and now. Through stories and wisdom literature from the major religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam—Chittister highlights practical, universal truths and shows how each spiritual tradition brings a special gift to the art of living a meaningful, spiritually aware life.

The Color of Light: Poems on Van Gogh's Late Paintings by Marilyn Chandler McEntyre (Eerdmans, 2007, $20) shows how these artworks testify to divine presence and invites readers to find their way through form, color and light into a new awareness of the Spirit.

Loving Natalee: A Mother's Testament of Hope and Faith by Beth Holloway with Sunny Tillman (HarperOne, 2007, $24.95) reveals Holloway's personal experiences in what is both a gut-wrenching true crime story and an inspirational tale of a mother's undying love and faith. Holloway's 18-year-old daughter Natalee disappeared without a trace in Aruba in May 2005. The mystery of what happened remains unsolved.

Culture Matters: A Call for Consensus on Christian Cultural Engagement by T.M. Moore (Brazos Press, 2007, $16.99) challenges Christians to learn "how to take what is good in contemporary culture, reclaim and retool it, and put it to work in a Christian framework for the sake of forging a new culture."

Doing Good Better: How to Be an Effective Board Member of a Nonprofit Organization by Edgar Stoesz (Good Books, 2007, $9.95) draws on years of various nonprofit board experience to offer practical and fresh wisdom in pointedly written chapters. This is a revised edition.

God's People Now! Face to Face with Mennonite Church Canada by Robert J. Suderman (Herald Press, 2007, $12.99) relies on quotes from more than 300 hours of face-to-face meetings with the grassroots of Mennonite Church Canada to offer a glimpse of the denomination's needs, wants and concerns.

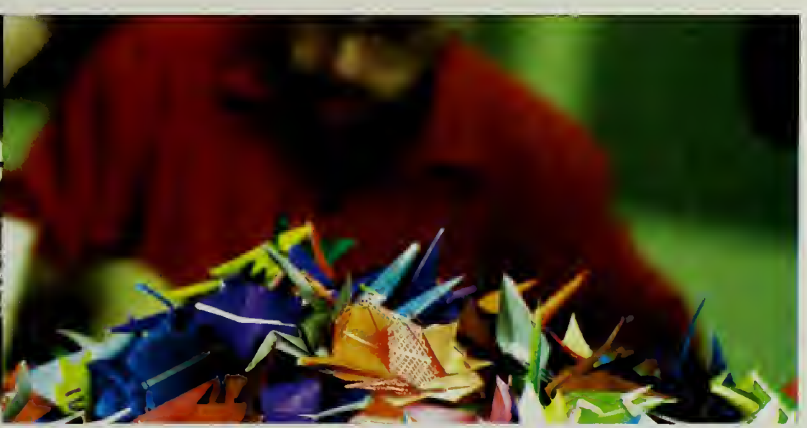
Send Forth Your Light: A Vision for Peace, Mission and Worship by Willard M. Swartley (Herald Press, 2007, $18.99) views peace and mission, both at the heart of Jesus' gospel, foremost of God's gifts. For those who faithfully worship God, peacemaking and sharing the gospel in mission are the fruit of the faith.

Changing Paradigms: Punishment and Restorative Discipline by Paul Redekop (Herald Press, 2007, $18.99) concludes that the practice of punishment is a major obstacle to healthy societies, families and schools. Punishment is so damaging to relationships, especially in children, that it should be reassessed on philosophical, spiritual and religious grounds, Redekop says.

Just As I Am: The Autobiography of Billy Graham by Billy Graham (HarperOne, 2007, $19.95) recounts meetings with presidents, celebrities and world leaders and shares his spiritual journey as he reflects on his personal life and relationships. This updated edition includes two new chapters.

Chasing Joy: Musings on Life in a Bittersweet World by Edward Hays (Ave Maria Press, 2007, $12.95) challenges readers to dig through life's miseries and darkest pains to discover the goodness God continues to promise. Hays is a spiritual guide for thousands of spiritual seekers of all faiths.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS
FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED
THE CHILDREN OF
GOD.
- MATTHEW 5:9



Goshen College's Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies program is built on decades of scholarship, a unique and nationally admired study-abroad program, a community that seeks diversity and Christ-centered core values rooted in the peace church tradition.

You might choose a major or a minor in a peace studies program, enhance another area of study wtih conflict mediation training, sign up for a semester of urban peacemaking study in Indianapolis, join the Pax or Eco-Pax student clubs and engage significant issues with guest speakers as well as your own professors and classmates.

We invite you to visit out welcoming campus to find out more – on your journey as a peacemaker.

GOSHEN
COLLEGE
WWW.GOSHEN.EDU/PEACE

***************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 875 15-DEC-09 34 31
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

It's not easier with age

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.—Matthew 5:48

The Lenten season begins with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 6. This is the season to reflect on our sins. If you are like me, it will be sobering. No matter how hard I try, the sin in my life just won't go away.

When I was a teenager, I believed that following God for 30 or 40 years would leave me close to the perfection expected. Now closing in on 60, I discover it's probably not going to happen. I also understand something an elderly seminary professor once shared in class: any movement toward perfection may be simply organic.

The late J.C. Wenger was reporting a conversation he had with a visiting scholar. When J.C. mentioned that it was easier for him to remain pure in his older years, the visitor said, "Or maybe it's just that our glands are wearing out."

I live in a neighborhood with many elderly people. Our large congregation has many older members and retired church leaders. For most of the last decade I watched these folks—most gracious and gentle–and imagined them as examples of the perfection to which we are called. A few seem to be perfect. They are humble, compassionate and Spirit-filled. They never say a negative word about another person. They live lives that are holy. I ask: How did they get that way? Were they born with genetic material radically different from the rest of us?

The 40 days of Lent are a time to be honest about our sins and strip away pretensions to perfection.

As part of my seminary training, I learned to anticipate this stage of life called "midlife transition"—a time when youthful idealism acquiesces to mature realism. I held out hope, however, that decades of worshiping God with God's people, daily devotions—even a master's degree in "divinity"—would transform this sinful soul into the perfection God intended.

But I keep sinning. The sins aren't illegal. Some might say they aren't even unethical. The sins are things like not really loving my enemies, or using verbal skills to win at any expense to the other person. Why do these behaviors persist after so many years of discipleship?

I and a few close friends are able to talk about our sins—we tend to call them "foibles." We would like to be perfect in a God-filled way. But something keeps tripping us up.

The realities about imperfection cause another problem: Since we are not perfect, we pretend to be perfect. Then we derive comfort in the culture of perfection we construct.

It is a truism that Mennonites "do." Our work ethic is part of the genetic material we inherit. Older generations called it "works righteousness." The assumption seems to be that if we work hard enough we can achieve anything—including freedom from sin. If we don't make it happen, then we are less worthy before God. So we read the commandment to be perfect as God is perfect and try to make it happen.

But Lent is the time to strip away all these pretensions to perfection. It is a time to acknowledge the stain of sin in our souls that just can't be washed away. It is a time to hear another reality Jesus explained to his disciples: What is impossible for man is possible for God.

Jesus was talking about a camel fitting through the eye of a needle when he said it. His simile referred to another kind of perfection: giving away to the poor all our material possessions. If we don't, Jesus said, we won't go to heaven.

The disciples were stunned. "Then who can be saved?" they asked. Jesus replied that what is impossible for man is possible for God.

This is the Lenten message: We are commanded to be perfect; we cannot be perfect. But God accepts us even with our imperfections—sins.

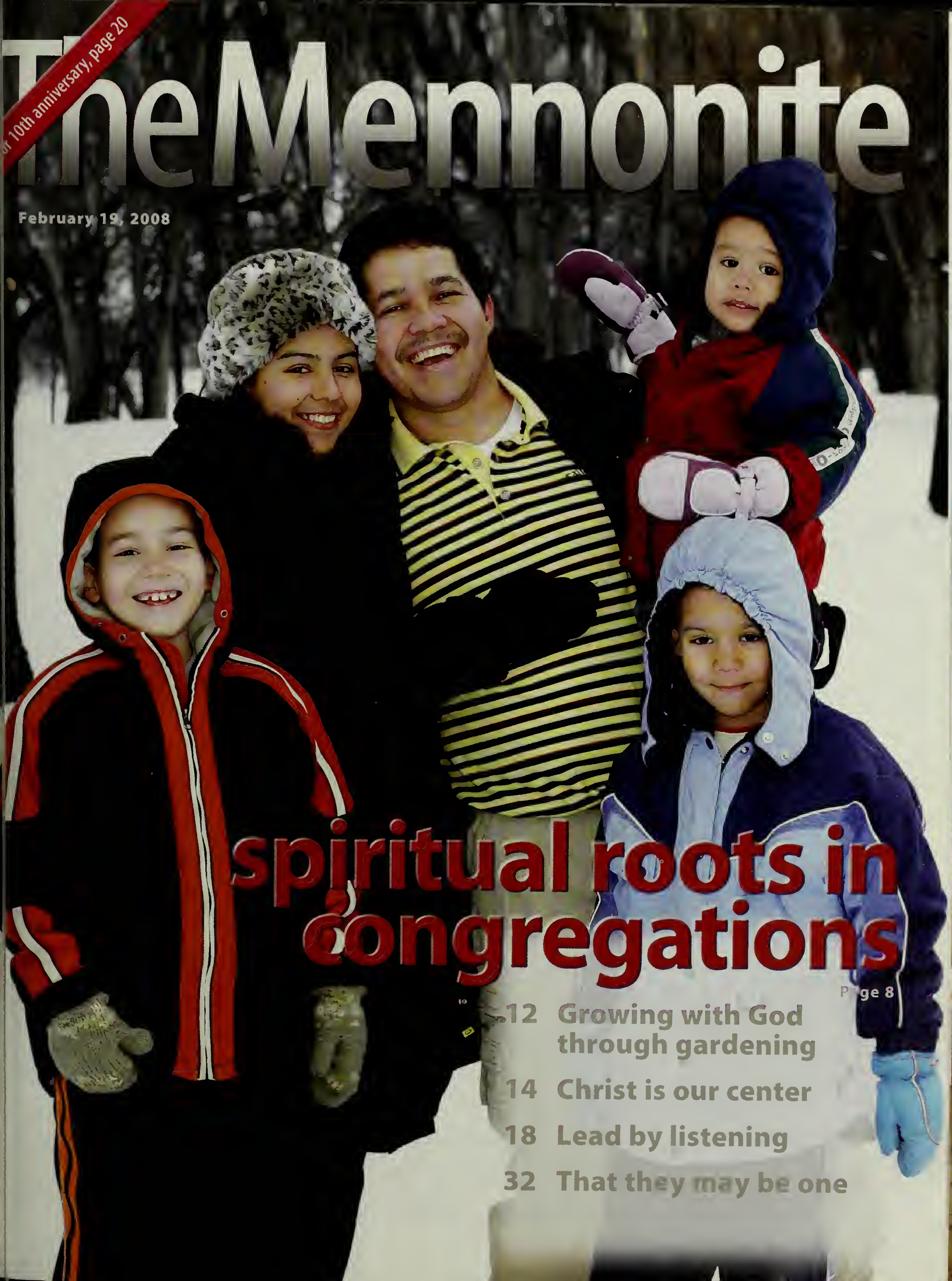
The 40 days of Lent are a time to be honest about our sins and strip away pretensions to perfection. Acknowledging our sins—at least to ourselves—won't make us any worse. Besides, God already knows about them and offers us grace even before we ask.—*ejt*

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

r 10th anniversary, page 20

The Mennonite

February 19, 2008



spiritual roots in congregations

Page 8

12 Growing with God through gardening
14 Christ is our center
18 Lead by listening
32 That they may be one

The night shines brightly

Rachel Gerber is associate pastor of faith formation at First Mennonite Church in Denver.

Living in winter is difficult. The daylight hours wane, and the darkness grows. One day, as dusk approached, Shawn and I headed to the park. This walk was our usual one. On this evening, we gathered with 2,000 others to walk under the shroud of darkness for those effected with leukemia and lymphoma.

Even though I was not affected by these types of cancer, with each step I found myself relating closer to those in this dark battle. I had my own type of cancer, one I had been trying to hide and ignore for some time. A part of me was being eaten up by an emptiness darker and colder than any night I had ever experienced. I could no longer feel the presence of God.

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest" (Psalm 22:1-2). Like the Psalmist, I found myself crying out in similar fashion.

My profession as a minister is to help lead people to find God, to help them create space in their lives to experience the healing river of God's love. Yet here I was, unable to find that drink for my own spiritual thirst.

The book *Come Be My Light* revealed that for almost 50 years Mother Teresa lived and worked without sensing the presence of God in her daily life. This saintly woman struggled, too, with her own areas of darkness.

I take heart from her story because I understand in a new way that perhaps my darkness comes out of nothing I have done. It is not a punishment. If it can happen to Mother Teresa, then I guess no one is exempt.

Where is the hope? The Psalmist continues (vv. 3-5a): "Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved."

It seems that between these lines is a recollection of seeing God at work. From this, I cling to what I know to be true, that I have seen God at work in my past, have felt God's presence and experienced grace, beauty and mercy in my life. From this I trust that God's felt presence will be there again in the future.

Perhaps this period of darkness in my life is an opportunity for me to go deeper in my spiritual life. Perhaps I am realizing in a new way that my spirituality is not about me but about God. In that vein, it isn't so much about the feeling I get from my walk with God as about my commitment to follow the path, despite the journey along the way.

As Shawn and I walked around the park that night, light speckled the sky—light in the form of balloons the participants were given, which had light bulbs in them flashing on and off. Family and friends of those with cancer carried these balloons. The metaphor moved me to tears: allowing others to hold the light for you when you are in the dark night, unable to do it yourself.

As a church community, we realize we aren't perfect, not even pastors. But part of what makes church special is that we have one another and don't have to journey alone in the night but can be light for one another—for the sake of the world.

In many ways I still journey in the darkness, but now the night doesn't seem so dark. I understand in a new way that even though I may not feel the presence of God, that I can see God working in the lives of others in my congregation. From this I take heart because I know God is present, is working and truly cares. The night is still here, but dawn may be closer than I thought.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 4, February 19, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

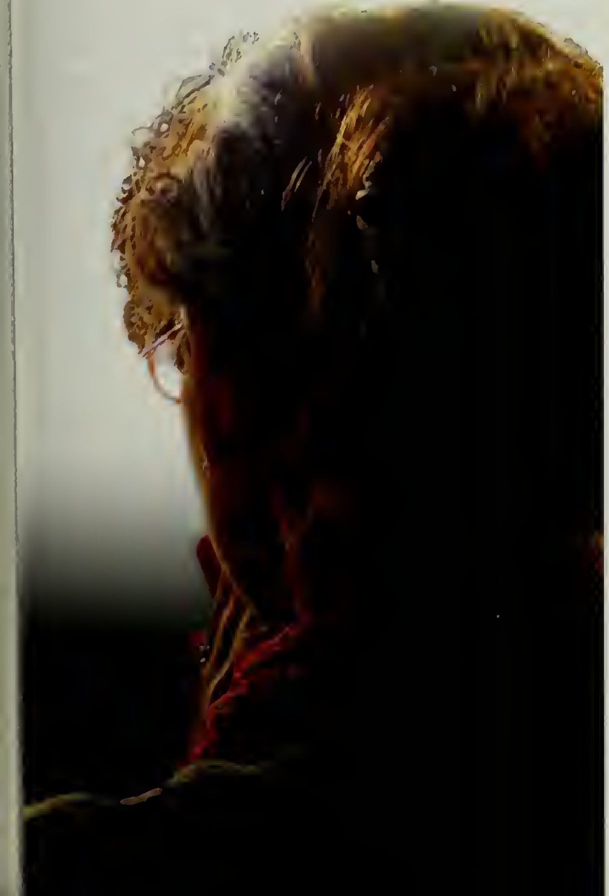
CONTENTS

7

24

19

17



FEB 22
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

8 Developing spiritual roots
A challenge from Teusaquilla Mennonite Church in Colombia—*Emily Will*

12 Growing with God through gardening
How one congregation taught its children and reached its neighbors through a peace garden—*Kristin Van Tassel*

14 Christ is our center
Mennonite higher education—part 4—*J. Daniel Hess*

19 John Powell shares his black history
Grandfather and great-grandmother about to be sold just before freedom—*Anna Groff*

20 *The Mennonite* is now 10 years old
First issue was dated Feb. 17, 1998.—*Everett J. Thomas*

22 Executive Board agrees to strengthen vision
—*Gordon Houser*

23 Wolof take risks to learn about Jesus
—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen*

24 Women learn to set boundaries in caring
—*Anna Groff*

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
The night shines brightly—*Rachel Gerber*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Leadership
Lead by listening—*Rachel Swartzendruber Miller*

25 For the record

30 Mediaculture
Slow food: ‘good, clean and fair’—*Gordon Houser*

32 Editorial
That they may be one—*J. Lorne Peachey*

Cover: Photo by Joanie Peters

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Wedding expenses in Babylon

Sara Wenger Shenk ("I'm Getting Married in the Morning," Jan. 8) commends couples and families for weddings that tell who they are, what matters to them. She warns against becoming carried away with pageantry, of photos becoming more important than the ceremony, of spending too much. I am grateful that she described their "hippie" wedding and the modest cost.

Two decades ago, my co-pastor and I were disappointed when a young couple, recent members from the community, went to the justice of peace to marry them. When I visited them, their straightforward answer shocked me, "We couldn't afford a church wedding."

Of course, the problem is bigger than how much we spend on weddings. John the Revelator called the first-century churches to "come out" of Babylon, to separate themselves from its wealth and affluent lifestyle—made available by the Roman military empire. Sad to say, our United States has become a military empire, a harlot enticing us to enjoy the "good life." Let us help one another "come out," return to simple lifestyles.—*Mahlon M. Hess, Lititz, Pa.*

Younger generations want certainties

Regarding "A Pastor Questions the Bible He Loves" by Tim J. Schultz (Nov. 20, 2007): I have read studies recently indicating the Mennonite church is aging. To me aging is a prerequisite to dying. Articles like this one may enhance the aging process as many of the younger generations want theological certainties rather than theological mush. They may look to other persuasions searching for certainties. There are those who believe that a number of the mainline denominations have suffered dramatic losses for similar reasons.—*P. Melville Nafziger, Lititz, Pa.*

IN THIS ISSUE

Ten years ago, on Feb. 17, 1998, the first issue of this magazine was published. To mark the anniversary we have provided some perspective about what the past decade has meant for *The Mennonite* (pages 20-21). One of the changes: the medium used by readers to send letters to the editor. When we began in 1998, so unique was a letter sent electronically (email) that founding editor J. Lorne Peachey created a special icon to mark each letter sent through this new medium. Now almost all letters come to us as email. That is why we were surprised to receive four paper letters and notes through "snail mail" for this issue. These four letters—received the old-fashioned way—lead off the Readers Say section on this page. What remains constant, however, is our interest in congregational life. In "Spiritual Roots in Congregations" (page 8) Emily Will describes the protective shield around members of a Colombian congregation who are regularly threatened with death. In her article on page 12, Kristin Van Tassel describes the power of a "church garden."—*Editor*

No one follows Scripture all the time

Ken Yost wrote in Readers Say why he believes in God but dislikes the church (Nov. 20, 2007). Many thanks to Ken for expressing and sharing his feelings. Sadly, his comments may contain some truth. But it is a temptation for everyone to pick, find fault, criticize, be negative, pessimistic and not work enough or contribute enough toward helpful, positive solutions.

We need a regular opportunity to be encouraged, to be challenged, to be fed, to share and develop our gifts and to be part of a Christian fellowship that puts God's plans and program into practice. For example, if Matthew 6:33 and Luke 10:27 were faithfully followed for 15 years before incarceration, U.S. prisons would be half to three-quarters empty. That's a negative, pessimistic, true statement. Why? No one continually, faithfully follows the Scriptures. But when we apply the Scriptures long term, untold blessings fall upon us.—*Art Martin, Goshen, Ind.*

Why publish Obama photograph?

In the Jan. 22 issue (News Digest), the photograph of Senator Obama in the lower right-hand corner of page 7 was the only example of Benjamin J. Meyers' photographs printed on 16x21-inch aluminum sheets to give the image a silver finish. If a reader doesn't connect the photo with Myers' work, the picture and information below it hint political support. Was that intended?—*Theresa K. Hostetler, Goshen, Ind.*

Associate editor's note: The photo was the only example provided with the news release about Meyers' work. No political message was intended.

Mennonite but not Anabaptist

Chad Mason gives us an important criticism of our tendency to overemphasize adult baptism ("Mennonite but Not Anabaptist," Jan. 8). Still, I think he goes too far. Adult baptism is not simply an individualistic attempt to find meaning. It offers a real protection against any community's (ours included) propensity to think that it has the truth all nicely packaged. Adult baptism protects us from the sin of self-satisfaction; it reminds us that every generation must experience the Spirit anew and that no birthright means anything before God. —*Mitchell Brown, Evanston, Ill.*

I am glad to see "conversation" on baptism being opened in *The Mennonite*. Noting the two articles ("Mennonite but Not Anabaptist" and "Musings on Baptism") in the Jan. 8 issue, three things stand out to me. First, neither article offers any Scriptural support for the positions they claim or the reasoning they use. Second, I am horrified at the proclamation that Mennonites should be about the business of refusing baptism on the grounds that seekers of believer's baptism are wanting to act as their own pope. Third, a less-than-evident problem in all of our church's discussion and teaching on Christian baptism is the fact that we have relegated it to being solely symbolic and enshrined it as such in our Confession of Faith. Thus are we drawn into unending questions about the application and meaning of the symbol. Yet a simple and straightforward reading of New Testament Scriptures on baptism, while revealing its use within and parcel to Christian community, also clearly indicates a spiritual functionality to the act.—*Marty Wenger, International Falls, Minn.*

Chad Mason responds

The debate surrounding my article, "Mennonite but Not Anabaptist"—including the article itself—has exposed confusion among us Mennonites regarding the purpose of baptism and the nature of Christian freedom. Baptism enacts a profound relocation from old to new, from darkness to light, from the world's culture of death and destruction to Christ's culture of life and love. For this reason I reiterate my commitment, stated explicitly in the article, to postcatechetical baptism as a practice clearly superior to infant baptism. But I will also reiterate the central question of the article. The world has undergone profound changes with the fall of Christendom, and the purpose of infant baptism has accordingly evolved in the believing communities who practice it. What are the implications of these changes for our longstanding practice of not recognizing infant baptisms?

We have not yet considered these implications well. Our current rationales for rejecting all infant baptism as baptism reveal that modernity has confused us about the very nature of freedom and personhood. Whenever we defend the "liberty" of the unencumbered self to "choose," apart from cultural influences, I begin to wonder if Descartes and Rousseau have not snuck into the meetinghouse. By contrast, a social conception of the self, participating in God's own social personhood as Trinity, might enable us to imagine a kind of Christian freedom that includes infant baptism, even if we think it wiser to baptize after formation.—*Chad Mason, Des Moines, Iowa*

Editor's note: Chad Mason's response to the 10 letters we have published in response to "Mennonite but Not Anabaptist" (Jan. 8) concludes the discussion of baptism raised by his article.

What about other school costs?

Regarding "Mennonite Higher Education May Be Cheaper Than You Think," (Jan. 22,): Will you be featuring the tuition costs of Mennonite private education at the high schools and middle schools? It would be helpful to see what the costs are across the United States and what congregations and families are doing.

The cost of tuition at the Mennonite secondary level has increased significantly the last 10 years. Total costs amount to about $7,000 a year based on having one of our children recently graduate from a Mennonite middle/high school after attending six years (this does not include room and board). Since there is no financial aid available from the government on this level of education, how do other families, congregations and the high schools and middle schools make ends meet?—*Dennis Stoesz, Goshen, Ind.*

Editor's note: The series we are currently publishing focuses only on higher education.

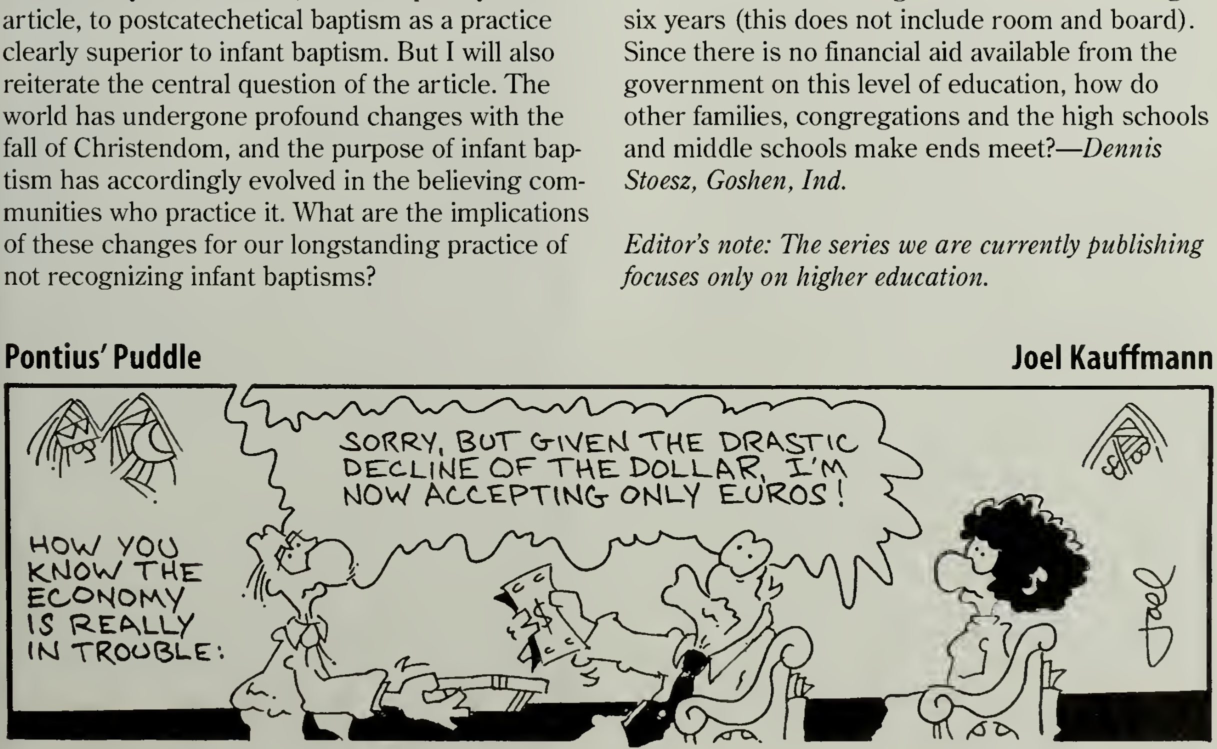
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

I believe God still does healing and provides protection from danger: (68 votes)

○ Yes (84%)
○ No (4%)
○ Not sure (12%)

Check out the new poll question at www. TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


HOW YOU KNOW THE ECONOMY IS REALLY IN TROUBLE:
SORRY, BUT GIVEN THE DRASTIC DECLINE OF THE DOLLAR, I'M NOW ACCEPTING ONLY EUROS!

IN BRIEF

EMS honors church leaders

Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., honored two veteran church leaders Jan. 23 for more than 50 years of ministry. Paul T. Yoder and John R. Martin, both of Harrisonburg, received plaques and letters of commendation during a church leadership banquet held during the annual School for Leadership Training. Their spouses—Daisy B. Yoder and Marian L. Martin—were also cited for their "significant supportive roles" over the years. Ervin R. Stutzman, dean of EMS, and Phil N. Helmuth, director of church relations, made the presentations at the recognition ceremony.—*EMS*

Students audit Mennonite church

A LegoRobotics team that included two members from Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore., took second place in the state competition. For their research project they did an energy audit on Zion Mennonite. The students concluded that since fuel is a nonrenewable resource, by investing in local produce the church would save fuel used for food transportation from other states and countries. They grew vegetables in a cold frame and proposed building a cold frame or green house at the church. —*Cynthia Hockman-Chupp*

Mennonite educators explore discipleship

PITTSBURGH—More than 600 teachers in Mennonite schools explored the positive and negative influence of electronic culture Jan. 31.-Feb. 2 at the Mennonite Educators Conference here with the theme "Discipleship in the Digital Age: Forming Followers of Jesus in a Hyper-Media Culture."

At the opening session, keynote presenter Shane Hipps told the group they have the ability to anticipate the future and power of electronic culture, just as educator and philosopher Marshall McLuhan did in the 1960s.

Hipps, pastor of Trinity Mennonite Church, Phoenix, Ariz., was a strategic planner in advertising for Porsche before he followed his call to be a pastor.

While the call of educators is to "shape minds and souls of humans," technology also does this—sometimes working for and sometimes against educators, he said.

Hipps did not call for ending the use of technology but stressed McLuhan's phrase, "The medium is the message." We must acknowledge everything as an extension of ourselves, so we do not become slaves to technology, he said.

Diane Zaerr Brenneman, pastor and educator, and John J. Miller, music and drama teacher at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite School, led worship at the conference, which is a partnership of Mennonite Education Agency and Mennonite Schools Council.—*Anna Groff*

Pastors in Zimbabwe risk lives in protest

GOSHEN, Ind.—Anglican archbishop John Sentamu, a Ugandan, cut up his clerical collar during a broadcast of the BBC on Dec. 9, 2007, and said he will not wear it until Robert Mugabe, current president of Zimbabwe, is out of office (News Digest, Jan. 8).

"What strikes those who visit Zimbabwe is how many have been undone by death," said Sentamu in the interview. "It is no accident that the average life expectancy of Zimbabweans hovers around 35, lower than any war zone."

Sentamu's Dec. 9, 2007, interview is posted at www.youtube.com/watch?v=I88Wy7otcrc.

In the days following his action, more than 50 members of the Zimbabwe National Pastors Conference decided local pastors should also do a "Sentamu" by planning a series of marches in Harare. The pastors said they are prepared to die for the transformation of Zimbabwe.

"God has chosen us to be the voice of the voiceless," said Lawrence Berejena in the *Zimbabwe Standard* on Dec. 16, 2007. "If we, as the church, remain silent, we will all perish."

"Since Mennonites in the United States participate in protests regularly, this may not sound like a big deal," says Joy Kauffman, an Illinois Mennonite woman who has taken special interest in the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe, "but in Zimbabwe, where gatherings have been made illegal, this is an act almost assuring arrest, imprisonment, even risking martyrdom. Those of us who are against war recognize this as a civil war of a regime, fueled by consumers and corporations who are complicit in profiting from the regime, against its own people."

HIV/AIDS, as well as political oppression, is ravaging Zimbabwe. Bishop Danisa Ndlovu, who leads the 80,000 participants in Brethren in Christ churches in Zimbabwe and is vice president of Mennonite World Conference, says, "Pastors in Zimbabwe these days do primarily three things: We visit the sick, we bury the dead and we try to comfort the bereaved."—*Everett J. Thomas*

Mennonite Men give $40,000 to Miami church

NEWTON, Kan.—Mennonite Men board members Royce Roth and José Hernandez presented a JoinHands Church Building grant on Dec. 16, 2007, in the amount of $40,000 to Church of God Prince of Peace, a Haitian Mennonite congregation in Miami. Schowalter Foundation provided $5,000 of the grant as well as additional money to help

Science center at Bethel wins design award

Krehbiel Science Center at Bethel College, North Newton, K received a 2007 citation for design excellence in the "built architecture" category from the American Institute of Architects—Colorado South Chapter. The design for the center, completed in 2002, had been recognized by the Nation Science Foundation's Project Kaleidoscope as a national mo for small, undergraduate college science facilities at a "Laboratory of the Future" conference held at the University St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., in 1998.—*Bethel College*

Anna Groff

Chinese yo-yo for Mennonite educators
Darvin Yoder, art teacher at Iowa Mennonite School, demonstrates the Chinese yo-yo at the first-ever talent show at the Mennonite Educators Conference Jan. 31. (See story on page 6.)—*Anna Groff*

with materials for renovations, which will be done as part of a partnership between Mennonite Disaster Service and MM.

Church of God Prince of Peace began in 1997. In 2002, members purchased an abandoned Pizza Hut and converted it into a church building. The congregation applied for a JoinHands Church Building grant and were approved to receive $35,000 to assist in much-needed renovations. The building is strategically located in the Haitian community and provides much-needed parking space.

Hilaire Louis Jean, pastor of Church of God Prince of Peace, says the church "has grown dramatically." Sunday morning attendance is about 250. He adds: "As our membership grows we have new challenges. Many of our members face immigration problems and are unemployed. As a result our budget projections have increased. We need funding to renovate and expand our building and provide resources to families who are in need. But with God all things are possible."—*Gordon Houser*

Seattle Mennonite helps count of homeless

SEATTLE—Josie Duby, 46 and homeless, told the six volunteers as they walked along Lake City streets, "Watch for the ice." In the hours before dawn on Jan. 25, she led the group to a triplex scheduled for demolition. Seven homeless people, including her, had been squatting there. The owner, said Duby, allowed them to stay as long as they paid the utility bills.

Inside one apartment, a man was in a sleeping bag on the carpet; another poked his head out a bedroom door, wondering what was going on.

Duby said not that many street homeless would be spotted: "They're at the church."

Being able to count the homeless at Seattle Mennonite Church, where Duby is active, made it easier for the volunteers who joined in the annual One Night Count of the Homeless in King County, Wash. The count showed a 15 percent increase county-wide in street homeless over last year.

The total was 2,631 street homeless, said Alison Eisinger, director of the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness, sponsor of the event.

The count did not include those staying in emergency shelters or transitional housing. Eisinger said it'd take two months to gather those statistics. But when those numbers are included, she said, an estimated 6,000 homeless will be added, for a total of some 8,600.—*Seattle Times*

MWC Assembly 15 theme chosen

STRASBOURG, France—"Come Together in the Way of Jesus Christ." These words have been selected as the theme for Mennonite World Conference Assembly 15, to be held in Asunción, Paraguay, in July 2009.

Themes of unity and service rose to the top of a long list of ideas from around the world that were considered by the Executive Committee and the Program Committee when they met in Asunción in August 2007.

Officers and senior staff met in Mainz, Germany, in January and decided on the theme's text after hearing suggestions that came out of Program Committee meetings in Paraguay last November.

"The theme of unity is reflected most explicitly in the first words: 'Come together,'" says Larry Miller, MWC general secretary. "The 'way of Jesus Christ' points to the description in Philippians 2 of how to come together, that is, as a 'servant' of one another and of all." Nancy Heisey, MWC president agrees: "Jesus Christ is our model and the one who empowers us for service."

Executive Committee members agreed last August that Philippians 2:1-11 be one of the foundational Scripture texst at Assembly 15. Now planners also have a theme on which to build as they develop the program.—*MWC*

—compiled by Gordon Houser

IN BRIEF

MCC sends aid to Gaza Strip

A shortage of fuel and power in the Gaza Strip is driving up food prices, medicine and other basic necessities needed to survive, says Daryl Byler, Mennonite Central Committee representative based in Amman, Jordan. Many items are now completely unavailable in Gaza or too expensive for many families, he says. MCC is responding to this crisis by providing $25,000 in emergency assistance to buy food, blankets and warm winter clothing for 180 of Gaza's most vulnerable households in the Khan Yunis Refugee Camp and Gaza City. Food and supplies will be purchased locally by MCC's long-standing partner organizations in Gaza and distributed to families selected by these local organizations. *—MCC*

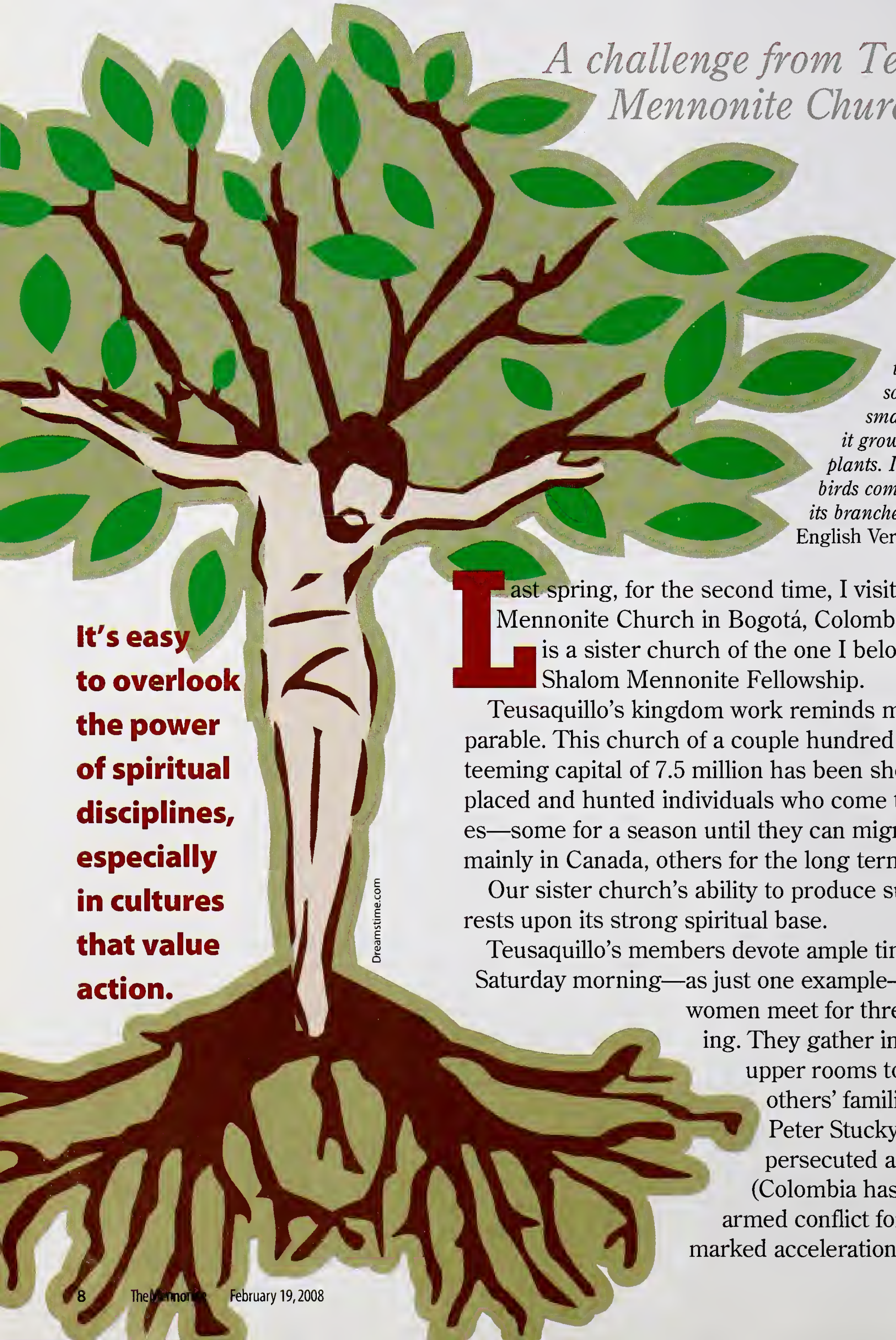
Blessed to give

The *New York Sun* reports that people who give money to charity were 43 percent more likely than nongivers to say they are "very happy" with their lives, according to the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey. The study also found that people who did volunteer work were 43 percent more likely to be happy than those who did not volunteer. A separate study at the University of Michigan found that people who gave money away were 68 percent less likely to say they had felt hopeless in the past month.—*The Christian Century*

Developing

by Emily Will

A challenge from Teusaquillo Mennonite Church in Colombia



Dreamstime.com

> *Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like this. A man takes a mustard seed and sows it in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it grows up, it is the biggest of all plants. It becomes a tree, so that birds come and make their nests in its branches.*—Matthew 13:31-32, New English Version

Last spring, for the second time, I visited Teusaquillo Mennonite Church in Bogotá, Colombia. This congregation is a sister church of the one I belong to in Tucson, Ariz., Shalom Mennonite Fellowship.

Teusaquillo's kingdom work reminds me of the mustard seed parable. This church of a couple hundred people in Colombia's teeming capital of 7.5 million has been sheltering the many displaced and hunted individuals who come to nest in its branches—some for a season until they can migrate to political asylum, mainly in Canada, others for the long term.

Our sister church's ability to produce such a thriving "tree" rests upon its strong spiritual base.

Teusaquillo's members devote ample time to prayer. Every Saturday morning—as just one example—a small group of women meet for three hours. Some are fasting. They gather in one of the church's upper rooms to pray for their own and others' families; for their pastor, Peter Stucky; for lay leaders; for the persecuted and for peace.

(Colombia has endured sporadic armed conflict for almost 60 years, with marked acceleration since the 1990s.)

It's easy to overlook the power of spiritual disciplines, especially in cultures that value action.

spiritual roots

It's easy to overlook the power of spiritual disciplines, especially in cultures that value action. This is understandable. Deeds are tangible, whereas—like the mustard tree's roots—we cannot view the spiritual realm.

I confess to valuing the seen over the unseen, even with plants, though as a master gardener I should know better. In one training session, the instructor presented two photographs. The first depicted a hale tree, about six years old, with a straight trunk and healthy green leaves. In the second photo, however, the presumed healthy tree had blown over, uprooted. Its now-visible roots were coiled in a tight cylinder.

What had gone wrong? The instructor explained that the sapling had languished too long in a cramped pot, which had warped its roots. In the ground, the roots had been able to transport nutrients to the branches, but they were too deformed to stretch out and support the tree's growing weight. The poor anchoring did not become apparent until a stiff breeze ripped the tree out.

My visits to Teusaquillo challenge me to think about my own spiritual roots. Are they twisted? Shallow? Would they keep me anchored in an environment as stormy as Colombia's?

The spiritual roots of the Colombian Mennonite Church must be deep and strong; they are producing some remarkable results amid turbulence. Although reluctant to talk about the outcomes, some of which are miraculous, church members are experiencing the gifts of the Holy Spirit in healing and offering physical protection to the persecuted.

Take the case of Juan Gomez and his wife, Jakelin, from a city southeast of Bogotá.

In 2003, Juan worked for an airline at his city's airport, selling tickets, arranging paperwork for cargo. Wanting to get ahead, Juan enrolled in criminal justice courses offered when Colombia's justice system was undergoing a major transformation. The former system had been patterned on France's, now it would be modeled on that of the United States.

One morning, Juan greeted and shook hands with one of his professors, who had arrived at the airport. At the time he thought nothing of it, but that salutation would soon turn his life topsy-turvy. The professor worked for Colombia's federal attorney general's office. That office was about to initiate a sting operation at the airport, which was controlled by a paramilitary group. Officials videotaped everyone on the scene and recorded personal identification numbers.

By shaking the professor's hand, Juan had unwittingly associated himself with the forces behind the sting. In the paramilitaries' eyes, he became an enemy.

Soon two men, with their comandante, came to Juan's house, forced him into a car and drove to a place unfamiliar to him. Once out of the car, they confiscated Juan's national identification carnet. They grilled him, not just about the professor at the airport but about another professor as well, also from the attorney general's office, with whom Juan had taken a forensics class. The students had helped perform autopsies on two paramilitaries.

Soon two men, with their comandante, came to Juan's house, forced him into a car and drove to a place unfamiliar to him.

The comandante slapped Juan, ordered him to kneel and held a gun to his temple. When Juan broke into tears, the comandante, surprisingly, let him go, saying, "Don't worry, your problems will be solved in five days."

From a former friend's experience, Juan knew the man's meaning: the paramilitaries would kill him within five days.

A cat-and-mouse hunt began. Juan hid in a series of places, first in his hometown, then in Bogotá. The paramilitaries remained a step behind. His sister, even his mother-in-law in another town, began receiving anonymous threatening phone calls, asking for Juan by name.

Eventually Jakelin and the couple's two preschool sons, as well as Juan's sister, also fled to Bogotá. They had joined the 3 to 3.5 million dis-

Continued on page 10

Joanie Peters

Topsy-turvy: Jakelin and Juan Gomez and their children, who now live in Winnipeg.

Continued from page 9

placed in Colombia, a country of 46 million and second only to Sudan in its number of internal refugees.

In Bogotá, Juan sought redress with a human rights organization; he believes this made the paramilitary group even more determined to get him.

While Juan resided in one sector of Bogotá, men canvassed his neighbors, showing Juan's carnet photo and asking for him.

Juan moved to another neighborhood. One day he was astonished to see copies of his photo, and some of his sister, plastered on the walls. The paramilitary group instructed a neighbor to tell Juan that for it, "an extremely large company," Bogotá, as huge and populous as it may be, was no more than "a little handkerchief."

Like many other dislodged and hounded people, Juan arrived at Teusaquillo Mennonite seeking help. The church provided refuge for Juan and his family for several days while one of the more intense waves of persecution ran its course. During this time, Juan volunteered to paint the church's third-floor walls. He noticed some were damaged due to leaks.

As Juan scaled the roof to make repairs, he lost his balance and fell through some plastic roofing tiles. He plummeted at the worst possible spot—a space open from the roof to an inner courtyard on the ground three stories below—some 12 meters (39 feet) onto concrete. (By comparison, the Olympic high-dive is 10 meters, or 33 feet, high.)

Some church members heard the crash and rushed to the scene. They phoned an ambulance. During the quarter hour or so until the paramedics arrived, the pastor held Juan and prayed, "Juan, in Jesus' name, breathe. Bones, organs, in Jesus' name, be healed."

Neither the paramedics nor the emergency room doctor believed anyone could survive such an impact; Juan's internal organs should have been smashed.

Neither the paramedics nor the emergency room doctor believed anyone could survive such an impact; Juan's internal organs should have been smashed.

Another doctor ordered a sonogram. It showed a fractured pelvis encased in blood, indicating ruptured organs. She sent Juan to intensive care to be readied for surgery. An hour later, right before surgery, the doctor requested another sonogram. It showed no damage—no blood, no fracture. She sent for several colleagues, seeking an explanation for the change. None had any.

Throughout Juan's hospital stay, many doctors visited, wanting to see the miracle for themselves. Juan told them that when he went through the roof, he had grabbed a ledge and seeing the immense height, prayed, "Lord, cover me." He then went into a free fall. About half way down, Juan said it felt as though something like heavy air turned his body so that instead of falling on his feet or head, he landed on his side. He believed God physically supported him during the fall, buffering him.

A complication required ongoing medical attention. During the plunge, Juan had brushed against barbed wire, and several pieces of it became embedded in one foot. Treatment required grafts. Gangrene set in; doctors feared they'd have to amputate. But the grafts took well, and antibiotics wiped out the gangrene.

When I first met Juan in July 2005, his foot was bandaged, and he used a crutch. He had another grafting operation scheduled, and he and Jakelin were to visit the Canadian Embassy the next day to see if they'd be granted political asylum.

I heard no more about the family until last March. After obtaining their phone number, I called them and learned they had been in Winnipeg for almost a year; they were attending Douglas Mennonite Church there.

Juan and Jakelin are grateful for a smooth transition to a different culture and climate. A church member gave them a car, an act of generosity that awed them.

Juan and Jacklin feel they are living proof that God is an active force in the world. Juan says some people think he's a fanatic, always talking about God's power. He'll never forget the great things God has done for him, however, and he cannot keep quiet. He doesn't yet know what he'll do long term, but likely it will have something to do with the ministry, at least informally.

Members of Teusaquillo Mennonite have had their prayers answered several other times.

In 2004, Yobani, a displaced man the church was trying to protect (after two close brushes with death) was kidnapped and stuffed into a car trunk. Church members gathered to pray when they heard the news. The car had a flat tire. When the kidnappers opened the trunk for the spare, Yobani asked for permission to relieve himself. At the edge of the mountainous road, in the dark, Yobani flung himself over the side. The kidnappers fired at him but did not hit him. Despite a stab wound on his leg inflicted by his captors when he resisted getting into the trunk, Yobani escaped to safety.

In 2005, Isabel, a persecuted woman, was abducted on her way to a meeting at the church. She was taken to a paramilitary camp well out of the city and told to await the commandante. Church members prayed fervently for Isabel. When the commandante hadn't arrived after several days, one of her guards, deciding Isabel reminded him too much of his mother, secreted her to a road, where she escaped to a city eight hours from Bogotá. Isabel later learned the young man who helped her escape was killed by the same group.

Since the late 1990s, Teusaquillo Mennonite has helped dozens and dozens of individuals threatened by paramilitaries, guerrilla groups and government forces.

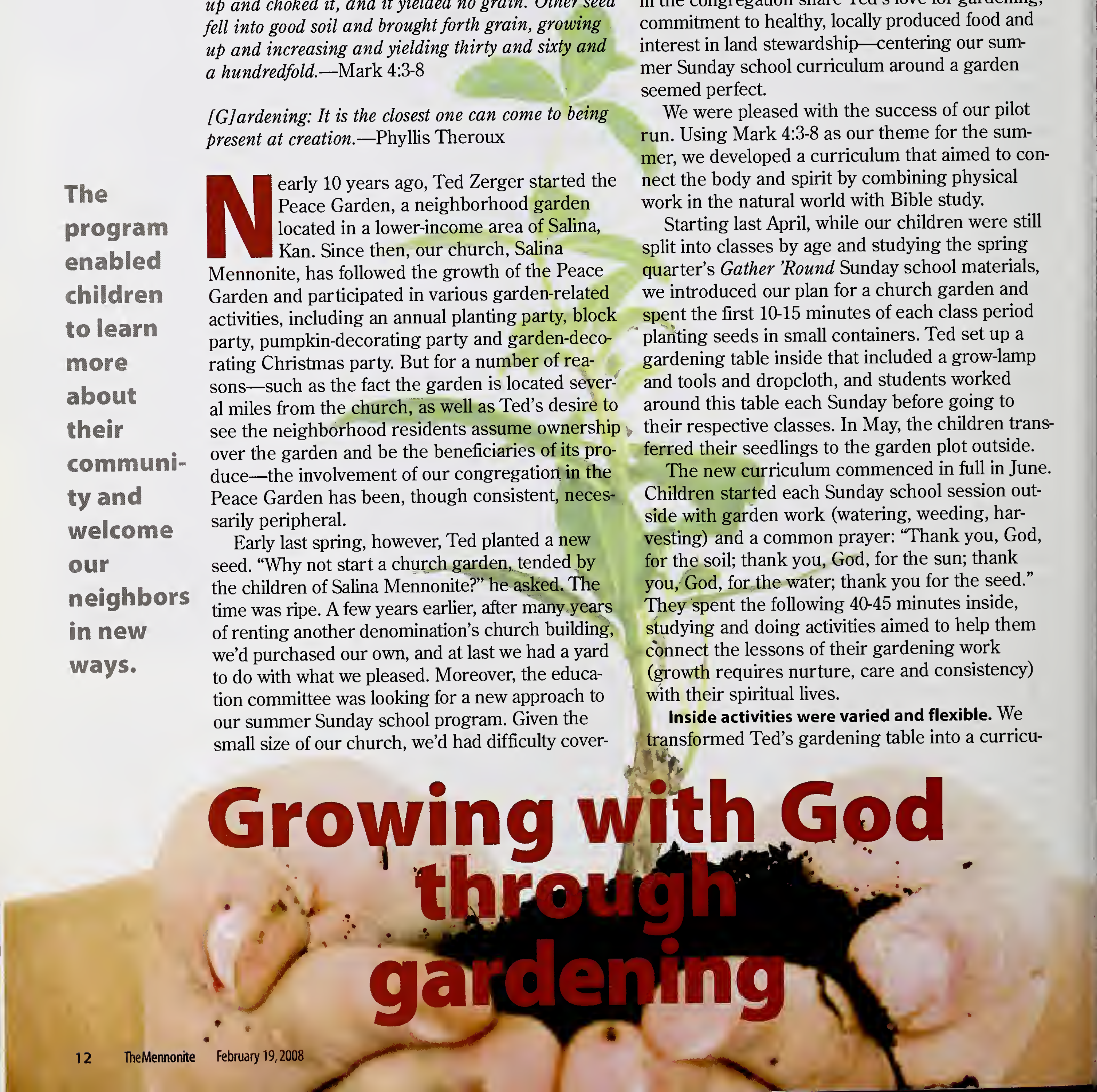
Since the late 1990s, Teusaquillo Mennonite has helped dozens and dozens of individuals threatened by paramilitaries, guerrilla groups and government forces. The congregation's justice and peace committee listens to their stories, prays with them and helps them search for alternatives for their lives. They emphasize the need to place themselves under the protection of God—who alone can protect them in Colombia—and under the faith community's spiritual cover.

Pastor Stucky has referred to this as a protective shield provided by the church's prayers. None of the hundreds of people who have followed this guidance have been killed. "God has honored the church's faith and action," Stucky says.

For me, Teusaquillo Mennonite embodies Jesus' parable. Although small in size, like the tiny mustard seed, it has grown to produce a tree with a wide canopy able to shade and protect those who rest in its branches. The Teusaquillo church takes heed of the vital role of strong spiritual roots in supporting it. Members nourish those roots with prayer, fasting, Bible study—spiritual practices—in tandem with concrete deeds to care for the physical needs of the marginalized and dispossessed.

May we pray for their ongoing faithfulness, and may they continue to challenge those of us who neglect our spiritual roots.

Emily Will is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church in Tucson, Ariz.


Dreamstime.com

Growing with God through gardening

How one congregation taught its children and through a peace garden

by Kristin Van Tassel

A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.—Mark 4:3-8

[G]ardening: It is the closest one can come to being present at creation.—Phyllis Theroux

The program enabled children to learn more about their community and welcome our neighbors in new ways.

Nearly 10 years ago, Ted Zerger started the Peace Garden, a neighborhood garden located in a lower-income area of Salina, Kan. Since then, our church, Salina Mennonite, has followed the growth of the Peace Garden and participated in various garden-related activities, including an annual planting party, block party, pumpkin-decorating party and garden-decorating Christmas party. But for a number of reasons—such as the fact the garden is located several miles from the church, as well as Ted's desire to see the neighborhood residents assume ownership over the garden and be the beneficiaries of its produce—the involvement of our congregation in the Peace Garden has been, though consistent, necessarily peripheral.

Early last spring, however, Ted planted a new seed. "Why not start a church garden, tended by the children of Salina Mennonite?" he asked. The time was ripe. A few years earlier, after many years of renting another denomination's church building, we'd purchased our own, and at last we had a yard to do with what we pleased. Moreover, the education committee was looking for a new approach to our summer Sunday school program. Given the small size of our church, we'd had difficulty covering Sunday school classes during the summer, when vacation schedules made attendance (for both children and teachers) uneven and unpredictable. We needed a multiage program that worked whether we had five children or 15 and could be supervised by as few as two adults per Sunday. For these reasons—along with the fact that many of us in the congregation share Ted's love for gardening, commitment to healthy, locally produced food and interest in land stewardship—centering our summer Sunday school curriculum around a garden seemed perfect.

We were pleased with the success of our pilot run. Using Mark 4:3-8 as our theme for the summer, we developed a curriculum that aimed to connect the body and spirit by combining physical work in the natural world with Bible study.

Starting last April, while our children were still split into classes by age and studying the spring quarter's *Gather 'Round* Sunday school materials, we introduced our plan for a church garden and spent the first 10-15 minutes of each class period planting seeds in small containers. Ted set up a gardening table inside that included a grow-lamp and tools and dropcloth, and students worked around this table each Sunday before going to their respective classes. In May, the children transferred their seedlings to the garden plot outside.

The new curriculum commenced in full in June. Children started each Sunday school session outside with garden work (watering, weeding, harvesting) and a common prayer: "Thank you, God, for the soil; thank you, God, for the sun; thank you, God, for the water; thank you for the seed." They spent the following 40-45 minutes inside, studying and doing activities aimed to help them connect the lessons of their gardening work (growth requires nurture, care and consistency) with their spiritual lives.

Inside activities were varied and flexible. We transformed Ted's gardening table into a curricu-

eached its neighbors

lum resource center, with copies of our theme verse, fiction and nonfiction books about gardening, and a folder full of relevant biblical stories/references and craft activities (gleaned from several community garden manuals). Adults in the congregation volunteered to oversee these multiage classes in two-week blocks. Every week our teachers reviewed the theme verse with the children, shared an object lesson (roughly equivalent in time and preparation to a children's sermon) and either read a story about gardening or led an activity that reinforced the lesson or gardening activity.

Over the course of the summer, the children made T-shirts, gourd maracas and necessary garden items (such as scarecrows, a milk jug irrigation system and labeled/illustrated wooden plant markers). Even more importantly, the children shared the fruit of their labor with the congregation. Throughout the summer, they brought the "first fruits" of their harvest to the altar during offering. In late May, they harvested lettuce and made and ate a salad together; in August they harvested carrots, potatoes, beans, peppers, onions and tomatoes and made soup for the congregation; in September they made a dish of their harvested sweet potatoes for our potluck. Even the youngest children were able to participate in the worship service and give to the church in a tangible way.

The Sunday school gardening program also enabled children to learn more about their community and welcome our neighbors in new ways. One weekend, the children visited the local food bank's community garden, located a few blocks from our church. There the kids learned about how growing food helps Salina's poorest residents eat. The children's own involvement in growing and sharing food made it possible for them to identify more fully with the recipients of the food bank garden. Moreover, the garden attracted neighborhood children to our church yard. One weekday evening, when Ted was checking on the garden, he found three young girls picking cherry tomatoes. They sat down on the church step to eat them together. A block over, Ted could hear the familiar song of the ice cream truck, but the girls paid it no heed. They already had their snack. Hence, our garden offered healthy activity and food to individuals beyond our own congregation.

One of the gardening curriculum's key planners and organizers memorialized the summer by taking photos almost weekly and compiling them in a scrapbook. She also helped the children make posters illustrating their own spiritual growth. These are now displayed in our Sunday school "common room." In this way, the children are reminded of their summer work and the connections between their physical and spiritual growth and health.

Annelle Claassen

First fruits to the altar: Ted Zerger helps Cedar and Luke Van Tassel harvest lettuce.

Certainly the success of our summer Sunday school project depended on the enthusiasm and commitment of several people. During the hot, dry weeks of mid and late summer, Ted stopped by several days during the week to water the children's garden. Several other adults spearheaded the indoor activities by organizing the activity folder and collecting materials for some of the craft activities. Starting a garden-centered curriculum requires leadership and organization.

Nevertheless, we heartily recommend that other congregations consider initiating their own church gardens. It is a project that can be easily adapted to the size and resources of a given congregation. It is accessible and fun for adults and children alike and inclusive by its very nature—the earth does not know age, gender, race, class, size or popularity. The fact that we all must eat reinforces the inclusive nature of gardening; the work of the garden draws individuals of all ages together in a common goal. Moreover, children found great satisfaction in the harvesting and preparing of their food, and their excitement was contagious. Finally, using gardening as a metaphor for our spiritual growth and communal cooperation makes the lesson real in ways a book or children's sermon never can. As Ted says, "You care for the soil, you care for the soul; the difference between soil and soul is U and I."

Our garden offered healthy activity and food to individuals beyond our own congregation.

Kristin Van Tassel is a member of Salina (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Christ is our center

Mennonite higher education—part 4

by J. Daniel Hess

The presidents of colleges, universities and seminary of Mennonite Church USA have published a statement about their highest priorities. Here is a key excerpt:

"Spiritual growth and a Christian worldview that Christ is our center. From it, students can build a foundation of values and commitments in a complex world. We support the work of the Holy Spirit in our students by inviting them to know Christ and follow him daily. In partnership with home and congregation, our institutions are places where people may embrace God's redemptive work within them."

I spoke with many alumni of Mennonite higher education and invited them to share what at this point seems meaningful about that education. Would they talk about being nurtured in Christ-centered spiritual growth and called to embrace God's redemptive work?

Who is this man, this historian, that he would so thoroughly integrate a worldview with spiritual convictions?

—Norma Flores

To college ... with an attitude

National figures concerning consumption of alcohol in college confirm that many first-year students, finally away from family constraints, are ready to live it up.

Steve Thomas (Hesston, 1984; Goshen, 1986), remembering his first year at Hesston (Kan.) College, puts himself into that category. "I was a jerk. My first year in college was fun and games, especially pulling lots of pranks across campus."

That's not the Steve Thomas who graduated from Hesston. He underwent a religious conversion during the summer between his first and second year and returned to Hesston with a calling to be a pastor. John Lederach stepped into Steve's life. "He was a pastor, a teacher, a real shepherd," Steve says. He says John's grace gently redirected him from a somewhat narrow charismatic orientation to a fuller understanding of biblical faith.

A small group of friends on campus, called the Groaners (based on a passage from Romans 8), complemented for Steve what John Lederach was doing in and outside class.

Steve Thomas

Steve graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College and has been pastoring since. He is in his 17th year as pastor of Walnut Hill Mennonite Church.

A college surprise

While a percentage of students are ready for a college fling, others come with high purpose. Such was Norma Flores (Bluffton, 2003), a member of the Church of God in Toledo, Ohio. She took an interest in history to Bluffton (Ohio) University, but when she enrolled in her first course with historian Perry Bush, she met a surprise. In her words, she was floored. "Who is this man, this historian, that he would so thoroughly integrate a worldview with spiritual convictions?"

And that spiritual perspective propelled Norma through a history major that included special research projects with professors Perry Bush and Jim Satterwhite (senior honors) and a semester at Oxford (England) through the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. She completed an M.A. in history at Toledo and is now specializing in European history at Bowling Green State University, where, she says, "It's OK to stand up and say, 'This is my spiritual belief.' " She learned this, she says, at Bluffton.

Spirit in the classroom

David Miller (Goshen, 1979; AMBS, 1993) did not grow up in a Mennonite congregation. He enrolled in a small, church-related college in eastern Pennsylvania but quickly became disillusioned with its so-called relationship with a sponsoring denomination. He withdrew after one year and signed up for a service assignment at the Center for the Handicapped in Rockville, Md., where he met a chap from Goshen College named Jim Brenneman (currently the school's president). That friendship led David to enroll at Goshen.

"While I completed a degree in natural science, it was in the area of Bible and theology that Goshen had the most far-reaching impact on my life," says David. "I thought I was choosing an academic institution and discovered much more—a faith community that was serious about living out its commitment in the world. I had no way of knowing in advance the significance that choosing to come to GC would have on my life."

He tells of the course The Believer's Church, where "I was a starving man in a deli and probably annoyed other students with my many questions and class interactions with J.R. Burkholder." David also found Umble Center stage an important laboratory from which to examine human motivation, conflict and potential. There he played major roles in "Company of Wayward Saints," "As You Like It" and "The Lark."

David eventually studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., then Columbia Theological Seminary (DMin, 2006). He pastors the University Mennonite Church in State College, Pa.

A time of searching

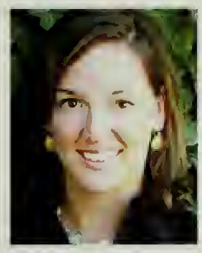
Laura Brenneman

Alumni shared many accounts of college as a time of searching for meaning and vocation. Laura Brenneman (EMU, 1996 and 2000; AMBS, 2001) grew up in a Mennonite congregation. She recalls a curiosity about the Bible that left her with many unanswered questions. At Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., she majored in biology in order to prepare for medical school. She remembers the kindness and encouragement of professors Lee Snyder and Ray Gingerich.

After a voluntary service term in Chicago, working in human rights with the Lutheran Church, Laura returned to EMU for a master's degree in conflict transformation that furthered her understanding of the social science basis of conflict. Something in that program intrigued her about the relationship of ethics to theology. What prompted Christians to react as they did in issues of justice and peace? To learn more she enrolled at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

There she met professors Ben Ollenberger, Mary Schertz and Perry Yoder; there she studied Scripture in its original language, and there she came to see the Bible not only as a text offering rich resources of close analytical investigation but also a motivator of faith, a guide for those who seek God.

She went on to the University of Durham in England for a Ph.D. and now teaches biblical studies at Bluffton University. In her interaction with students, she recalls the profs "who took time to say a word."


Rachel Gerber

The late teens and early 20s—in other words, college days—are for many students a time to take vacation from religion. For others, such as Rachel Gerber (Goshen, 2000; EMS, M.Div., 2005) those times provide pivotal turning points in the spiritual journey. Rachel was an education major at Goshen and enjoyed student teaching, but a call came to be interim minister of youth and adults at College Mennonite Church in Goshen. She accepted, and it was "an awesome experience."

But when her husband (Shawn) moved to Harrisonburg to begin seminary studies at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Rachel took a job as fifth-grade teacher in nearby Bridgewater. Again she enjoyed the classroom, but restlessness prompted her to think about seminary. She talked with a colleague who said, "You've got to go."

I thought I was choosing an academic institution and discovered much more—a faith community that was serious about living out its commitment in the world.—David Miller

At EMS she experienced the mentoring of Heidi Miller Yoder, who "walked with me as a colleague." But Rachel, despite her happy memories at College Mennonite and a sensed call to the seminary, had not thought of herself in ministry.

In a Formation of Discipleship class, professor Nate Yoder asked students to write about what they would be doing in 10 years. The assignment overwhelmed Rachel. She turned to a group of friends who helped her to write, "I will be a pastor."

Rachel is now associate pastor of First Mennonite Church in Denver (and writes for the Grace and Truth column in *The Mennonite*. (Shawn is director of the chaplaincy department at a local hospital.) She helped plan and lead youth worship at San José 2007. She loves her work, particularly that part having to do with faith formation, yet to this day Rachel isn't sure where the next turn will take her, but "I am committed to the journey."

Continued on page 16

Continued from page 15

Preparation for spiritual leadership

Many spiritual leaders in Mennonite denominations and beyond have studied and found vocation on our campuses of higher education. One example must suffice. Jim Schrag (Bethel, 1966), executive director of Mennonite Church USA, grew up in a "legacy" family. His father, Menno Schrag, was editor of *Mennonite Weekly Review* and at the dinner table talked about church things: "the three C's: conference, college and congregation."

Jim Schrag

Jim attended Hesston Academy (a Mennonite high school), then Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and finally Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, where he found "a treasured pattern" of teaching that eventually led him into the ministry and denominational leadership.

He recalls, for example, Bethel's Bible teacher Walter Klassen inviting his freshman students to write down any question of faith or theology. Jim dared to respond by scribbling a question about the inspiration of the Bible. "I was blown away; the next class he spent the entire period attending to my question without exposing me. I shall not forget such caring."

More on the professor's role

In the conversations with alumni about faith formation in college, I heard many more references to professors than to chapel presentations. The dedication of academicians to matters of faith is evident.

Irene Kanagy

Irene Kanagy (EMU, 1973; AMBS, 1984), a clinical counselor in Indianapolis, says some of the best years of her life occurred at AMBS, where, in community with professors, staff and students, she learned about grace. "I shall never forget professor Willard Swartley's praying with me about an impending decision."

Judy Hostetler Mullet (Hesston, EMU, 1973) has been a professor at EMU for about 20 years, teaching in both the education and psychology departments. She speaks of students as on a journey, some on the way out, some on the way back. "In order to find home, sometimes you have to leave it," she says. She wants to walk with them, identify their gifts and most of all share what she calls "holy moments," which may consist of a sidewalk chat. For students who seem to walk away from precious things, she wants to say to them, "I will hold it for you until you come back."

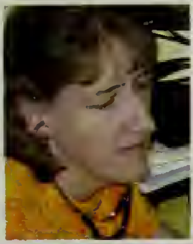
She believes in education "formed in community in the way of Jesus," and that formation, she says, often consists of little things "that add up."

Embracing God's redemptive work

The college presidents speak of our institutions

In order to find home, sometimes you have to leave it.
—Judy Hostetler Mullet

as places "where people may embrace God's redemptive work." The alumni I contacted conveyed in their words and actions a continued identification with God's redemptive work. Here is an example from among hundreds.


Marilyn Metzler

Marilyn Metzler (EMU, 1993) lived in Somalia and Djibouti, where she worked at a clinic that treated 200 patients daily, many of them refugees, and in a United Nations feeding station that served porridge to 300 children and nursing mothers daily.

As her assignment came to a close, she wanted to find work among under-served people in the United States. She took a position with Cross Over Ministry, a free clinic begun in 1983 with four sites in Richmond, Va., that is committed "in the name of Jesus Christ" to bridge the health-care gap.

Her people, society's marginalized, are poor, uninsured, eking out a living 200 percent below the federal definition of poverty, people whose housing is substandard and educational level low, people who know the ravages of heart disease, diabetes and domestic violence, people of color, people who know firsthand the disparities in the availability of health care.

"As a follower of Jesus," Marilyn told me, "I am compelled to do what Jesus did." She lists a variety of ways Jesus addressed human needs resulting from "societal wrongs." "If I can show grace and give value to one person, it will make a difference."

When pressed to identify her gifts, Marilyn identifies herself as an introvert and naturally quiet. "I am a country girl at heart (she grew up in rural Alabama), but I have the ability to empathize, I have a strong desire to empower others, I see injustices that scream at me."

Mennonite higher education resides in the realm of a secularized, materialized and individualized academic world. Instead of enthroning intellect, our Mennonite schools place Christ as the center.

In the spirit of Anabaptist voluntarism, Mennonite higher education does not compel a person to have faith, and it does not enforce religious practice. Instead it offers community, models, invitations and connections to God's redemptive work.

Alumni testimonials show that Mennonite higher education has been a significant stimulus and shaper of faith and, in fact, an extension of the denominational goal to be a missional church.

J. Daniel Hess is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. This is the fourth of six articles on Mennonite higher education.

Bible heroes

by Abbie Nixon Kiefer

From the solidness of this pew,
I can shake my head at it—
showing up late to the party
and demanding the holes,
the gored side—

But on another day,
I could touch the place where skin bares rib,
could put a palm to my eye and look right through

and still walk away, shaking my head,
the wounds real, but not realer than my own—

On another day,
three denials would just be my start,
thirty silver coins would outweigh my remorse,
and hope would be hard to get at,
buried beneath the waves
like I would be
if I tried to walk on water.

Abbie Nixon Kiefer lives in Cary, N.C.

Stockxpert.com

Lead by listening

Rachel Swartzendruber Miller is associate director of Convention Planning for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership.

Some may assume that if you're a listener or the quiet one in a corner, you're less likely to be a strong leader. I beg to differ.

Recently I enjoyed coleading the first planning committee meeting for Mennonite Church USA Convention 2009. About 30 of us gathered in Columbus, Ohio—the site of the next convention—to complete the daunting task of discerning a theme and Scripture text for that convention.

The committee's work will determine the focus of our worship sessions when Mennonite Church USA gathers as one body June 30-July 5, 2009, in Columbus. We were humbled by our task yet excited about where we—both as a committee and as a denomination—may end up.

Our committee includes pastors, youth pastors, conference ministers, high school youth, agency and Executive Leadership staff and congregational lay leaders. This mix provided perspectives and gifts from across our denomination. These leaders were tapped for this role either by their congregation, area conference, agency or school, and most came with the acknowledgement that she or he has great leadership skills.

For me, this group exemplifies what church leadership is all about. The committee is creative, focused, dedicated and spiritually mature. Most importantly, it seeks ways to invite and listen to God's Spirit moving among them.

We spent time praying, reading Scripture, sharing personal journeys and discussing denominational joys and concerns. Tears were shed, laughs rang out, ideas were challenged, and ultimately trust was formed.

As a group leader, I stood in awe throughout the meeting. It has never been more obvious to me that I was not the "leader." My job was to listen. It has taken time, but I have learned a few things about leadership. True leadership is not coming with agendas or an amazing plan. It is not communicating why your idea is best. And true leadership is not hanging on to the idea that you have all the answers.

True leadership is a two-part equation. First, a leader must let their people go. Leaders must make a space for creativity, questions, excitement and tactful disagreement. The second half of this equation is the most important: After the people are set free to let their minds run wild, a leader must listen to what comes forth.

Jesus took time to listen. He listened to lepers, Gentiles, Zaccheus and the woman at the well. And if there's one leader whose example we are to follow, it's Jesus.

Discerning a theme for convention requires listening to the Spirit's leading. We went round and round. We came up with cheesy and great ideas, helpful Scripture and Scripture that seemed to speak to individuals rather than a faith community.

Leading is listening to where the Holy Spirit is taking you, me and the broader church.

After two days of meeting and with two hours remaining, we still had no theme or Scripture. So we sent two from the adult planning group and three from the youth planning group to meet. They talked and prayed with each other while the larger group spent time praying for them.

We were listening. The leaders were listening. Committee members were listening. When we took time to be silent and listen, we were able to surrender agendas and welcome the theme that group would bring.

After an hour, they returned. They were glowing, some with tears in their eyes. It was obvious God's Spirit had moved them. "Breathe and Be Filled" was the theme. It was there by the Spirit as we stopped to listen.

Each committee member was tapped because of his or her "leadership skills." But really it was their listening skills that made the difference.

Leading is listening to where the Holy Spirit is taking you, me and the broader church. Leading is letting go of selfish motivations and trusting that God's plan is the right plan, even when it may not be what we want.

Our Scripture for Convention 2009 is John 20:21-22. It reads: "Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'"

Breathe and be filled. Be filled with the Holy Sprit so that you can go out into the world as a disciple of Christ, sharing God's healing and hope with the world around us. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **The way is made by walking**—Arthur Paul Boers
- **Living like Jesus**—Ron J. Sider

John Powell shares his black history

Grandfather and great-grandmother about to be sold just before freedom

John Powell's grandfather (11 years old at the time) and great-grandmother stood on the auction block, about to be sold as slaves, when the Emancipation Proclamation finally reached into east central Alabama "after harvest" in the fall of 1866.*

Powell, Mennonite Mission Network interim director for U.S. Ministries, is only two generations removed from slavery. He heard the story of his ancestors' freedom from his father. After their freedom, they decided to stay on the plantation with the slave owner but changed their last name from the slave owner's name to "Powell."

Several of his grandfather's brothers had already been sold before the Emancipation Proclamation, and the family was never fully reunited.

"The history of slavery is not that far from us," he says, "[my story] is not hard to talk about because it's part of who I am today."

His great-grandmother was biracial and the favorite concubine of the slave owner. That made his grandfather, John Paul, who went by "Jack," the illegitimate son of the slave owner. Powell says he heard that his grandfather could have passed as white.

As the son of the plantation owner, John Paul was taught to read and write. After his freedom, John Paul stayed near the plantation, eventually married and became a sharecropper—gaining and then losing land during the Great Depression.

John Paul instilled self-worth in his children and told them, "You are no better or worse than anyone else," and, "Respect people, and people will also respect you."

Powell heard he was a well-respected man across race and class in the community, although Powell never met his grandfather, who died in 1933.

Powell also grew up in Alabama but left the south in the early 1960s for Detroit, where he taught school, became a pastor and worked as a labor union organizer.

He was the first African-American from his community to go to college. He attended Tuskegee (Ala.) University, where he was involved in civil rights on campus.

Powell worked with Martin Luther King Jr. during the civil rights movement through voter registration in Alabama and Mississippi. King advised him and others to explore involvement in peace churches. So Powell researched Mennonites and Quakers, choosing Mennonites. "I became a pacifist during my civil rights days," he says.

Anna Groff

John Powell's grandfather and great-grandmother were being sold at a slave auction when news of the abolition of slavery arrived and halted the auction.

Powell worked with Michigan Migrant Ministry in 1963, became more familiar with other Mennonites serving with Mennonite Voluntary Service and met his wife, Shirley Hochstedler.

In 1968 he became pastor at 10th Street Mennonite Church in Wichita, Kan., and served on the Minority Ministries Council from 1969 to 1974, being the first under-represented racial/ethnic person to work in the Mennonite Church at a denominational level.

Powell left the church in 1974, however, "promising never to return." Years later (in 1993), Powell says he was "evangelized" back into the Mennonite Church by Mennonite Board of Missions staff and friends with whom he worked on urban issues.

"I found myself being drawn back in," he says.

Powell says when he started working in the church at that administrative capacity, he thought he "had all the answers and so did the church." But in reality, neither did. This reminds him of how his grandfather would say, "Never assume you have the truth."

According to Powell, his grandfather, "a periodic churchgoer," said, "The church is not in the building; church is in the heart." But Powell's father told him, "Your grandfather would be proud of you," as Powell's ministry is something John Paul should have done in his life.

During retirement, Powell plans to research more of his ancestry—hoping to go back beyond the three generations with which he is familiar. He says it will also give his three adult children some additional foundation.

"I think everyone wants to know how they are connected," he says.—*Anna Groff*

The history of slavery is not that far from us.—John Powell

*President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863. The 13th Amendment (abolishing slavery) was approved by Alabama Dec. 2, 1965, and ratified by the U.S. Congress on Dec. 6, 1865. Powell notes that news of freedom traveled slowly in those days.

TheMennonite is now 10 years old; first issue was dated Feb. 17, 1998

theMennonite
February 17, 1998
The new kid on block
8 Pursuit of justice
12 I watched the state kill my friend
14 Beginning with 8, starting with two
19 Down to whole wheat bread
17

Ten years ago, two church periodicals with some 200 years of combined publishing history ceased publication: *Gospel Herald* for the Mennonite Church and the former *The Mennonite* for the General Conference Mennonite Church. In their place came a new periodical with an old name: *The Mennonite*. This new periodical was authorized by delegates to their respective 1997 assemblies in Winnipeg (GCMC) and Orlando, Fla., (MC).

The new *The Mennonite* was to serve as a vanguard for the coming merger of the two denominations into one North American church. But within a year, it was clear that the merger would create two national churches: Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA.

The challenge for founding editor J. Lorne Peachey (see page 32) came from the "old" as he and his staff created a new periodical for a new church. This new periodical could not look too much like either of its predecessors. Furthermore, it was to be the periodical for Mennonite Church USA. But that entity did not yet exist.

It took almost two years of planning to create the new magazine. Peachey remembers the first planning meeting in May 1996 in a small motel room near the Kansas City, Mo., airport. The meeting was with GCMC representatives, including general secretary Vern Preheim.

"Vern went out to his car and brought in a folding table and a trouble light so we could see," Peachey says. "I've said since that *The Mennonite* got its start under a trouble light."

With the first issue, dated Feb. 17, 1998, the magazine became a transition periodical published by an Interim Periodical Board from 1998 to 2001 (see timeline). Format and frequency for the interim period was weekly, two-color and 16 pages.

With the creation of Mennonite Church USA in 2001, the current governance structure replaced the Interim Periodical Board. The format and frequency also changed to four-color, 32-pages and publication dates on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. These changes were timed to the official beginning of Mennonite Church USA.

Associate editor Gordon Houser is the only current staff member who was on the inaugural staff.

"Putting together a magazine is a day-to-day job," Houser says, "but it's good occasionally to look back in gratitude for *The Mennonite*'s continuing service to its readers. Without their commitment, the magazine loses its life and its joy."

Circulation trends: According to the *Mennonite Directory*, total GCMC and MC membership in Canada and the United States in 1997 (at the time delegates were authorizing the creation of a new

TheMennonite circulation and readership

	MC USA membership[1]	Circulation[2]	Total readers[3]	Percentage of MC USA[4]
2003	113,972	12,484	26,840	23.5%
2005	111,031	11,651	24,700	22.2%
2007	109,315	10,984	26,252	24%

1. *Mennonite Directory* began listing Mennonite Church USA membership numbers in its 2003 edition. Membership numbers are not available for 2002, 2004 and 2006.
2. From each October's USPS Statement of Ownership (paid and requested copies).
3. Calculated from annual readers' survey asking how many people read the copy sent into the respondent's household ("pass-along" rate).
4. Percentage of denomination that reads *The Mennonite* if all readers are members of Mennonite Church USA. The 2006 Church Member Profile and the 2007 People in the Pew data estimate this percentage at 31 percent and 43 percent, respectively.

1998

Gospel Herald and the former *The Mennonite* cease publication in January.

Interim *The Mennonite* begins Feb. 17, 1998.

1998-2001

Interim Periodical Board publishes *The Mennonite;* printed by Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa.

2000

Founding editor J. Lorne Peachey resigns in April. Current editor Everett J. Thomas begins in November, moves editor's office to Goshen, Ind.

2001

The Mennonite, Inc., is formed as not-for-profit Indiana corporation after MC USA delegates and Executive Board create new board of directors.

TheMennonite
holy spaces

20

N
des
launch
Jar
inclu
full color and 32 pa

Data from a 2007 survey shows the main reason Mennonite Church USA members do not subscribe to The Mennonite *is "Never have time to read."*

magazine) was approximately 170,000. Putting together the mailing lists of the two former periodicals was a difficult task. Our best estimate is that the first number of subscribers was about 22,000 (including subscribers in Canada). That represented about 12.9 percent of the membership in the two countries.

By 2007, this "saturation percentage" dropped to 10 percent of a Mennonite Church USA membership totalling 109,315. The most significant factor in this decline was the loss of Canadian subscribers. By the end of 2007, only 472 Canadians were subscribing to *The Mennonite.*

More important to us than the number of copies printed is knowing how many people read the magazine. We determine this by asking respondents in the annual readers' survey to tell us how many other people read the copy that arrives in their homes. According to this survey, about 24 percent of Mennonite Church USA members read *The Mennonite* (see chart at left).

However, two independent studies done by Mennonite Church USA's Executive Leadership showed much higher percentages. The 2006 Church Member Profile showed 31 percent of MC USA members read the magazine. According to the 2007 People in the Pew data, the magazine is in 43 percent of MC USA households.

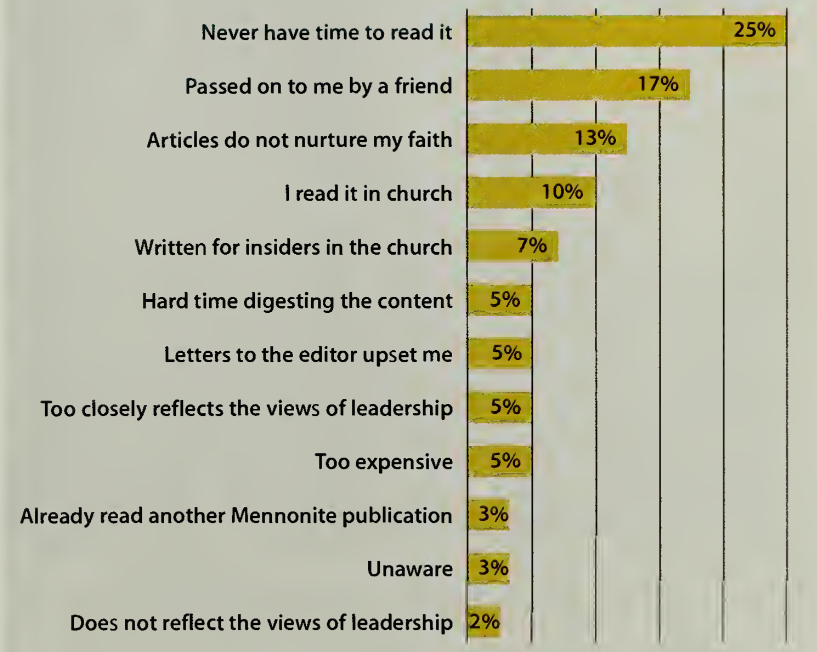
Most valuable to us is the data from the 2007 People in the Pew survey asking why MC USA members do not subscribe (see chart at right). At its June board meeting, these data will be on the agenda for both board and staff members.

Digital world: The changes in electronic communication affected *The Mennonite* in at least two significant ways during the past decade.

First, the use of electronic files and ftp sites means that each issue remains in electronic form until the file is sent into production at the printing press. Consequently, staff members do not need to be in one location as we work over the Internet from Newton, Kan., Goshen, Ind., and Pittsburgh. These electronic processes have taken considerable expense out of production costs.

Second, more and more people prefer to get their news through the Internet. So in October 2007, we launched a weekly electronic magazine, called an "ezine," that is free. This allows us to provide breaking news every Monday, offer "teaser" articles that point to our next issue and publish articles—we call them "Web exclusives"—that may be too long to publish in *The Mennonite* magazine.—*Everett J. Thomas*

Why Mennonite Church USA members do not subscribe to TheMennonite



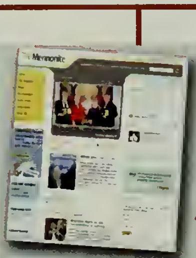
Source: 2007 The People in the Pew study

2004

nting moves to IPC
nt Services in St.
eph, Mich., with
nsiderable savings in
e cost of printing and
iling.

2005

Delegates to Charlotte 2005 approve a new bylaw that establishes *The Mennonite* as "self-supporting entity" within Mennonite Church USA.



2007

New Web site launched with multimedia

TMail

2007

New electronic newsletter called *TMail* offered free

when you can't pray

2008

Executive Board to strengthen vision

Board chooses Pittsburgh, Pa., over Phoenix, Ariz., for 2011 convention site.

Believing change is needed if Mennonite Church USA is to follow its vision, the denomination's Executive Board (EB) set in motion a process it expects to include "streamlining and consolidation of our churchwide organization" (see statement in box below).

The board met Feb. 8-9 in San Antonio, Texas, hosted by San Antonio Mennonite Church. On Feb. 7, board members also took part in antiracism training.

The statement grew out of two closed sessions, then was read publicly on Feb. 9 and passed unanimously. Moderator Sharon Waltner said, "Our passion for [Mennonite Church USA] leads us to take risks."

Our passion for the church leads us to take risks.
—Sharon Waltner

Executive Director Jim Schrag said the statement comes out of a six-year review, which has been ongoing. (Mennonite Church USA formed in 2002.) "Current structures," he said, "do not adequately support our vision."

The statement is also an outgrowth of conversations between the EB's executive committee and the chairs of the four agencies of Mennonite Church USA Jan. 25-26 in Columbus, Ohio.

The board's action, said moderator-elect Ed Diller, is driven by vision, not by any sense of financial or other distress. It grows out of feedback from delegates to San José 2007, from other constituents and from studying the 2006 Church Member Profile (published as *Road Signs of the Journey* by Conrad L. Kanagy).

Waltner said the board wants to take its leadership responsibility seriously as it seeks the best direction to fulfill the vision of Mennonite Church USA. Diller added, "We want to do what we can to support the vibrancy we see in congregations."

That vibrancy was on display in a meeting with "owners"—members of the San Antonio church, Comunidad de Vida and DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection)—one evening. At each of its meetings, the Executive Board meets with local leaders. Each meeting is in a different location around the country.

At this meeting, Hugo Saucedo, a church member and director of the local DOOR program, said that Mennonites in San Antonio are known as people who serve others. A former pastor told him, "I wish I could get you people to preach what you practice."

Saucedo, a longtime Mennonite, said he plans to remain one, even though some people at San José told him he'll never be a Mennonite because of his name.

The board heard a report from Jorge Vallejos, director of convention planning, that recommended Pittsburgh, Pa., being the site for the 2011 convention, pending successful completion of contract negotiations. Vallejos said that based on many variables, Phoenix, Ariz., was the best option. However, given the low attendance at San José 2007, the likelihood of a larger attendance, given proximity to the largest number of constituents, made Pittsburgh the best value.

The board agreed with the choice and agreed with a staff recommendation that conventions continue on a two-year cycle, subject to further processing at the Constituency Leaders Council. They also adopted a convention purpose statement that includes, "Gather as a body of Christ to experience joy in relationship while building denominational vision and identity."

The board conducted an evaluation of MMA (Mennonite Mutual Aid). MMA president Larry Miller reported that its board is looking at revising its ends statement to emphasize empowering "persons with Anabaptist beliefs" rather than "the Anabaptist faith community." EB members expressed some caution about a direction that appeared to focus more on individuals and asked about how MMA has worked at antiracism.

A national identity task group reported its progress to EB members. Its purpose is to "formulate a process that helps the church explore our identity as Mennonites living in what many consider the wealthiest and most powerful nation on earth by providing resources that help us live faithfully in Christlike ways."

The group encouraged EB members to attend the binational "People's Summit for Faithful Living" this July in Winnipeg.

EB members accepted a budget for fiscal year 2009 of $2,141,378, a 2.9 percent increase over last year's budget.—*Gordon Houser*

Statement by Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA

As the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA, we speak with a single and unified voice declaring that our vision and call to engage in God's purposes in the world is not adequately supported by our present relationships, behaviors and organization.

We will pursue this reality further between now and our next meeting in June 2008 in discernment with agencies and conferences, primarily in meetings that are already planned.

We will pursue all options that strengthen our vision to joyfully follow Jesus into the world and our capacity to be God's people at work for God's purposes. We expect these options to include streamlining and consolidation of our churchwide organization. We are committed to changing our relationships, behaviors and organization, prayerfully seeking new guidance of the Holy Spirit for Mennonite Church USA.

Wolof take risks to learn about Jesus

Growing number of women eager for God's Word in Muslim culture.

Palpable silence charged the atmosphere in the meeting room at the Center of the Way of Righteousness in St. Louis, Senegal, where brightly dressed women sat on reed mats.

(Normally, teaching takes place against a patter of background conversation in Senegalese women's gatherings, where community cohesion trumps what any individual might have to say.)

However, this group of more than 30 Wolof women set themselves apart on Jan. 12 as different, as risk-takers.

They gathered in St. Louis because they wanted to know more about Jesus—a dangerous desire in a culture that is 99.9 percent Muslim and where persecution often results from changing spiritual allegiance.

"This is an exciting time," says Margaret De Jong, a Mennonite Mission Network associate with Friends of the Wolof. "I sense an eagerness for God's word, and Senegalese seekers are growing in faith, while national followers of Jesus are beginning to take leadership roles.

"Attendance at gatherings is increasing. Seven years ago, you wouldn't even have found four members in the local church."

Agencies collaborating in ministry among the Wolof people helped Senegalese followers organize the day-long women's seminar in St. Louis. Friends of the Wolof and Pioneers are two of these agencies.

Joanna Beske, Pioneers worker and presenter of the day's topic, "Our Identity Before God," bound the wrists of a woman with an old rag, repeating words that these women hear with depressing frequency, "You are stupid."

The familiar litany of belittling comments accompanied more knotted rags, "You are not pretty. You can't do anything right."

When the woman was immobilized by her cloth shackles, symbolizing emotional disempowerment, Beske changed from the everyday language of lies and began speaking God's personal word of love into the life of each woman present.

"You are created in God's image," she said.

"You are precious in God's sight."

"Jesus died for you to have eternal life."

With each biblical truth, Beske stripped a rag away from the encumbered woman until she stood free. Then, a woman dressed as a princess stepped forward.

"This is who we really are," Beske said. "We are all princesses, daughters of God. We are beautiful and precious in God's eyes."—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of Mennonite Mission Network*

Margaret De Jong

Wolof followers of Jesus share a meal during the women's day seminar in St. Louis, Senegal.

Retirement is not downhill – it can be breathtaking.

Our free booklet, *Your enough,* can help you plan for a thrilling retirement. Call us or visit our Web site today for your copy. Get on track.

(800) 348-7468, Ext. 202
www.mma-online.org

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

© 2007 Mennonite Mutual Aid

Women learn to set boundaries in caring

Ninety Virginia women attend the pilot Mennonite Women USA Sister-Care.

Anna Groff

During an activity using construction paper to represent women's life stories, Barb Borntrager shares her creation—a timeline of her life.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

While role-playing, 90 women demonstrated how not to listen by "one up-ing," giving unsolicited advice and curing instead of caring. Then they practiced effective listening and caring skills.

Women of Virginia Mennonite Conference participated in this and other practical activities at the first weekend Sister-Care meeting, led by Rhoda Keener, executive director of Mennonite Women USA, Feb. 1-2 in Harrisonburg, Va.

Sister-Care trains lay women to become more effective in their caring in the church and encourages them to explore ministry. The "care" stands for "calling our giftedness, attending (being present), resource sharing and encouraging."

The meeting in Virginia served as a test for use in other conferences. The Mennonite Women USA board will discuss where next to take the Sister-Care training at their board meeting in March.

Keener used a story from an experience she had while traveling internationally to explain the need for setting clear boundaries while caring for others. After Keener had been ministered to and prayed for by a woman friend, Keener wept and felt vulnerable. At this moment, the woman who prayed told Keener that while spirituality is important, she has economic needs. She asked that Keener return to the United States to begin marketing dresses that she made to sell. Although Keener felt taken off guard, she said she would buy one dress, but that she cannot sell dresses.

These situations are why people don't want to get involved, Keener said, as many people find it too hard to say no.

"To open your heart means you also have to say no. ... When we build fences we can be free and we won't need to 'run away' from people's needs," she said.

Keener first used the Sister-Care program she created with a group of women from four churches in her conference, Franklin Mennonite Conference. They met monthly for nine months and continue to meet. Keener decided the best way to test Sister-Care in another conference would be at a weekend retreat and then invite women participants to continue in their churches, working with their pastors.

Evelyn Hertzler, Mennonite Women USA board member, also attended and said, "I feel like we really need this because many women are working and can't meet as they did in the past to share their needs and concerns. Women still have the same needs."—*Anna Groff*

Coping with depression

Rebecca Sommers, Mennonite Women USA president, says depression is like sex when she was growing up: No one talked about it. She told the Sister-Care group her depression began at an early age. When she slept through family gatherings, her grandmother said, "This just isn't right"—but Sommers' actions weren't addressed in any other way. She said she wonders if today her mother and teachers would've noticed this behavior.

Sommers

Later in life, Sommers agreed to go for treatment and be on an antidepressant when needed. She will never forget when her physician asked her, "Are you able to pray to God?" She replied, "Not always." He said, "That is when we need other people to pray for us." Sommers told the group, "I will always battle with some form of depression ... but it does not mean I can't function as a normal person." She added that she wants a place, such as the church, where people aren't trying to "fix" each other, but offer encouragement to take "tiny, positive steps," such as:

- finding ways to be creative through art or music;
- starting a "gratitude book" and writing down one thing you are grateful for each day without repeating;
- spending time with interesting and positive people; eliminating the negative people;
- avoiding sugar and caffeine;
- identifying situations that trigger depression; for example, shopping or clutter in the home or office.

—*Anna Groff*

Local people serving the insurance needs of Mennonites and Brethren in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

For information about home, auto, farm, church, or business insurance find a local Goodville agent at goodville.com or 1-800-448-4622.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

CALENDAR

Biennial Sustainable Food and Farming Conference, March 7-9, at **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa**. Conference title is *Growing and Eating Simply in Season* with keynote speaker Kathleen Hockman-Wert. For information visit www.laurelville.org/program/sustainable.html

Friendship Community, Lititz, Pa., will host its ***15th annual festival and auction***, May 9-10, at 1149 East Oregon Road near Lititz. For more information, contact Betty Hess at Friendship Community, 717-656-2466, ext. 165,

Nov. 6-9, ***Business as a Calling 2008: Dividends of Hope***. **Columbus, Ohio**. Mennonite Economic Development Associates. For details visit www.meda.org or call 1-717-560-6546.

WORKERS

Gochnauer, David L., was ordained as lead pastor at River Corner Mennonite Church, Conestoga, Pa., on Dec. 9, 2007.

Hayes, Benjamin R., lead pastor at Buffalo Mennonite Church, Lewisburg, Pa., resigned Dec. 16, 2007.

Landis, Betty, Lititz, Pa., who was licensed as chaplain, retired on Dec. 31, 2007.

Lauver, Glenn, was licensed as associate pastor at Lauver Mennonite Church, Richfield, Pa., on Jan. 6.

Ressler, Elvin J., bishop of Millwood District, Pa., retired Dec. 31, 2007.

Shantz, Kathy Keener, was installed as associate pastor at James Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., on Aug. 1.

Steffy, Karl, lead pastor at East Petersburg Mennonite Church, East Petersburg, Pa., resigned Dec. 2, 2007.

Tice, Adam, was installed as associate pastor at Hyattsville Mennonite Church, Hyattsville, Md., on Nov. 11, 2007.

Weaver, Earl S., associate pastor at Weaverland Mennonite Church, East Earl, Pa., retired Jan. 1.

Weber, Larry H., was ordained as lead pastor at Bowmansville Mennonite Church, Bowmansville, Pa., on Jan. 1.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Adams, Wyatt Daniel Patrick, Jan. 24, to Roger and Jennifer Bergen Adams, Manhattan, Kan.

Kauffman, Daphne Ann, Jan. 16, to Duane and Deanne Eash Kauffman, Sarasota, Fla.

Kauffman, Phoebe Yoder, Nov. 17, 2007, to Carl and Kristin Yoder Kauffman, Harrisonburg, Va.

Laird, Aaron John, Jan. 15, to Tim and Kristen Salisbury Laird, Sterling, Ohio.

Mast, Matthew Merrill, Dec. 27, 2007, to Marcelo and Melissa Allebach Mast, Lansdale, Pa.

Reifsnyder, Brock Henry, Jan. 3, to Hank and Megan Mease Reifsnyder, Orrville, Ohio.

Reinford, Joshua Dean, Jan. 7, to Neil and Donna Harnish Reinford, Smoketown, Pa.

Zehr, Zoe Marie, Jan. 17, to George and Jamie Zehr, Croghan, N.Y.

MARRIAGES

Nuzzo/Schrock: Steve Nuzzo, Akron, Ohio, and Maria Schrock, Hartville, Ohio, Jan. 26 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

DEATHS

Bartel, Erna Fast, 93, Aberdeen, Idaho, died Dec. 25, 2007. Spouse: Herbert Bartel. Parents: Walter and Elise Claassen. Funeral: Dec. 27 at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

Subscribe TOGETHER and SAVE

If you would enjoy terrific savings on ***The Mennonite***, now is the time to form a **group subscription**. With our tiered-pricing system, groups of at least five members save more than $6 per year per person compared with the individual subscription rate.

The Mennonite
when you can't pray

Start your subscription today:

- Log on to our Web site at **www.TheMennonite.org**,
- Send an email to **Subscriptions@themennonite.org**,
- Or call Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498**

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

Boney, Gregory A., 15, Warren, Ohio, died Dec. 10, 2007. Mother's name: Connie L. Boney. Foster parents: Richard and Velma Myers Shetler. Funeral: Dec. 14 at First United Methodist, Warren.

Boshart, Clarence, 91, Colorado Springs, Colo., died Jan. 11 of pneumonia. Spouse: Ida Belle Boshart. Parents: William and Cora Stutzman Boshart. Children: Judy Witham, Peggy Thompson, Betsy Bloom; eight grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 16 at Living Springs, Colorado Springs.

Clemens, James Rittenhouse, 94, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 10 of a heart attack. Spouse: Eva Moyer Clemens (deceased). Parents: Jacob C. and Hanna Rittenhouse Clemens. Children: James W., Frederick P.; three grandchildren; three step-grandchildren; six step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 13 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Clemmer, Edna L. Landis, 83, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 12. Spouse: Jonas S. Clemmer (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Pearl Miller Landis. Children: Sharon Landis, Donna Martin, Ronald, Jane Plessinger, Luann Miller; 15 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 15 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Enns, Tina Bergman, 82, Altona, Manitoba., died Dec. 14, 2007. Spouse: Jacob Enns (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Tina Siemens Bergman. Child: Leonard; two grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 22 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Esmonde, Susann Mae Bowsher, 70, Lima, Ohio, died Jan. 4. Spouse: Larry Esmonde. Parents: Adrian and Emma Lucille Stemen Bowsher. Children: Michael, Kelley Jones, Jill Donovan; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Chiles-Laman Funeral Homes, Lima.

Geil, Olive Marie Brunk, 99, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 16. Spouse: Lewis Geil (deceased). Parents: Jesse and Myrta Berry Brunk. Children: James L., Robert; five grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; 12 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 23 at Rieth-Rohrer-Ehret Funeral Home, Goshen.

Gerber, Leonard, 92, Dalton, Ohio, died Jan. 1. Spouse: Dorothy E. Zuercher Gerber. Parents: Peter P. and Anna J. Hofstetter Gerber. Children: Judie Nussbaum, Cathie Braun, Lendora Nussbaum; eight grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 4 at Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Graber, Dillon J., 88, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 3. Spouse: Fern Klopfenstein Graber. Parents: Pete and Sarah Rich Graber. Children: Charlotte Rosenberger, Janet Gerber, Connie Marner, Angie Groff; two grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 19 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hartzler, Ellie C. Peachey, 95, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 20. Spouse: Harvey J. Hartzler (deceased). Parents: Gideon J. and Sadie Spicher Peachey. Children: Roy T, Harvey L., Ethel Kaufman; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at The Meetinghouse at Greencroft, Goshen Ind., and Jan. 23 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Hershberger, Ernest Eugene, 86, Glendale, Ariz., died Dec. 6, 2007. Spouse: Vida Leah Schloneger Hershberger. Parents: William James and Manerva Hershberger Hershberger. Children: Lowell, Donna Rempel, Vivian Jaberg, Bruce, Maynard; 14 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 10 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Hertzler, Mary K. Beyeler, 73, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 29, 2007. Spouse: Joseph S. Hertzler. Parents: Noah and Viola Mast Beyeler. Children: Julia Hertzler, Theresa Jantz; four grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 2 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hertzler, Sharlene E. "Shades" Esbenshade, 54, New Holland, Pa., died Jan. 29. Spouse: Dale E. Hertzler. Parents: Ferree and Marian Smoker Esbenshade. Child: Emily Hertzler. Memorial service: Feb. 2 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Hess, Jared Alan, 29, Philadelphia, Pa., died Jan. 25 of complications from acute myelogenous leukemia. Spouse: Anne Rachel Beavers Hess. Parents: Hal Hess and Christine Mae Schumacher. Children: Caleb Daniel, Noah Benjamin. Memorial service: Feb. 2 at Germantown Friends Meeting, Philadelphia, Pa.

Jantz, Bertha Wedel, 93, McPherson, Kan., died Jan. 21 of pneumonia. Spouse: Elmer Jantz (deceased). Parents: Fred C. and Ida Edith Koehn Wedel. Children: Barbara Jean, Donna Marie, Roger Marion, Jane Rose; seven grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 25 at Moundridge Funeral Home Chapel, Moundridge, Kan.

Kauffman, Mary Stoltzfus, 89, Orrville, Ohio and Gordonville, Pa., died Dec. 11, 2007. Spouse: Harold S. Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Elva Zook Stoltzfus. Children: Jerry, Doris Risser; four grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 14 at Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Lauver, Esther A., 88. Mechanicsburg, Pa., died Jan. 15. Parents: Jacob G. and Amanda Weaver Lauver. Funeral: Jan. 18 at Slate Hill Mennonite Church, Camp Hill, Pa.

"I knew right off that getting Rich to understand our mission would be easy. Rich has a heart-felt connection with our work and quickly became a stakeholder in our success."

Leroy Willems, *Executive Director*
Goldensun Peace Ministries (AZ)

CONSULTING IN
Strategic Visioning
Campaign Services
Fundraising Services
Enrollment Services

ADVANCEMENT
Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

A volunteer and a resident enjoy a birthday party

Goldensun Peace Ministries (AZ)

Lehman, Frances E. Schnell, 94, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 29, 2007. Spouse: Marion Lehman. Parents: Hervey and Emma Yoder Schnell. Children: Kermit, Rex, Eric; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 7 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Scholl, Marcella Liechty, 86, Sterling, Ill., died Dec, 21, 2007. Spouse: Maurice Scholl. Parents: Amos A. and Della Nussbaum Liechty. Children: Harvey, Duane, David, Beth Oujiri; 13 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Whiteside, Ill.

Schrag, Ellen J. Goering, 79, Inman, Kan., died Jan. 1. Spouse: Reuben P. Schrag. Parents: Henry and Lydia Stucky Goering. Children: Lowell, Dale, Steve, Judy Barlow, Lavella Borough, Charlotte Michel; 15 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 4 at Inman Mennonite Church.

Smoker, Arthur Emanuel, Sr., 88, West Chester, Pa., died Jan. 6 of artherosclerotic heart disease. Spouse: Dorothy Virginia Malin Smoker. Parents: Elam E. and Elizabeth M. Mast Smoker. Children: Arthur E. Jr., Howard P., Emerson R., Robert E.; nine grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Frazer Mennonite Church, Frazer, Pa.

Smucker, Ella Pearl Ramseyer, 94, Goshen, Ind., and Smithville, Ohio, died Jan. 9. Spouse: Paul R. Smucker (deceased). Parents: John and Mae Ramseyer. Children: Ralph, Alvin, Mark, Don, Lynn; 15 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at Smithville Mennonite Church.

Smucker, Merl R., 96, Orrville, Ohio, died Dec. 11, 2007. Spouse: Grace Schwary Smucker (deceased). Parents: Amandus and Fanny Liechty Smucker. Children: Mary Jo Smith, Glen, Gorda DePasqua; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 20 at Smithville Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Starner, Raymond J., 82, Millersburg, Ohio, died Jan. 30. Spouse: Ruth Miller Starner. Parents: Ray and Clara Kinsey Starner. Children: Randy, Sue Weaver, Linda Weiss; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church, Walnut Creek, Ohio.

Steider, Ray, 98, West Liberty, Ohio, died Dec. 19, 2007. Spouse: Edith Morgan Steider. Parents: Henry and Catherine Birky Steider. Children: Jim, Larry, Don, Merlin, Dean, Carol Steider, Wilma Hadlock, Alice Stoltzfus, Arliss Ketchum; 23 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 22 at Community Church, Conneaut Lake, Pa.

Wiebe, Justina, 86, Altona, Manitoba, died Jan. 20. Spouse: Jacob G. Wiebe. Parents: Peter P. and Justina Dueck Friesen. Children: Dorothy Driedger, Jacob, Edward; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 25 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Maurice O., 81, Elkhart, Ind., died Jan. 12. Spouse: Gladys Weaver Yoder. Parents: Eldon and Maude Hostetler Yoder. Children: Kathleen Kulp, Susan Klaassen, Steven, Bradley; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"**As a Bible professor and director of peace and conflict studies at Bluffton University, I have the opportunity to emphasize and live out in the classroom the Mennonite values of close attention to scripture and nonviolent action.** I love reading the Bible with students and thinking about how Jesus' teachings ask all of his disciples to be peacemakers. It is exciting to see students take Jesus' call seriously for their own lives as they are making decisions about what sorts of people they will be in the world."

– Laura Brenneman, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion and director of peace and conflict studies

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

Bethel Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio, seeks ***pastor*** to re-energize graying congregation, full-time/part-time by vocational open options, contact pastor search committee: dlandis002@neo.rr.com.

Chief Operating Officer: **Rockhill Mennonite Community** is a not-for-profit, continuing-care, faith-based retirement community located in beautiful Bucks County, Pa. Over the past 68 years, Rockhill has established an excellent reputation as a caring community, and our staff continues to maintain and strengthen this distinction. Our primary goal at Rockhill is to serve the needs of our residents in a holistic way as a Christian-centered community. We are currently seeking a COO with a Pennsylvania nursing home administrator license to be responsible for the ongoing management of Rockhill's operations. The COO works closely with the Chief Executive Officer to plan and develop strategic direction and policies, implement organizational vision and direct and coordinate the various departments. Bachelor's degree and at least five (5) years of management experience in a long-term health-care facility are required. Submit inquiries to COO Search Committee, Rockhill Mennonite Community, 3250 State Road, Sellersville, PA 18960, or to rsawatsky@rockhillmennonite.org. or alandis@rockhillmennonite.org

Notice to pastors: Spend quality time with your family and receive spiritual nurture at ***Pastors Family Retreat*** April 11-13 at **Spruce Lake Retreat** (located in peaceful Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania). Speaker, Duane Beck. For reservations, call 800-822-7505 or www.sprucelake.org.

Lead pastor: **Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ont.**, is an urban congregation of approximately 300. Through an 18-month healing ministry led by an intentional interim pastor, we are rebuilding our congregation. Our contemporary mission statement and our commitment to the Transforming Church program demonstrate the energy our members are devoting to revitalizing this church. We invite applications for a full-time lead pastor. The successful candidate will lead a ministry team in identifying our congregation's gifts, be experienced in preaching and worship planning, reflect Anabaptist beliefs, be competent in administration and visitation and help develop authentic worship for members and seekers. Please contact: Muriel Bechtel, Conference Minister, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, 4489 King St. East, Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2, or www.wkumchurch.com.

New book: "Amish Soul on Ice" by John N. Keim available now at amazon.com or books.com; "an Amish boy's slide from his past."

The **department of nursing at Goshen College and Goshen Health System** seek applicants or nominations for a ***full-time joint appointment, nursing faculty and clinical nursing research***. Duties include classroom teaching at the undergraduate and graduate level for Goshen College, and clinical nursing research at Goshen Health System. Doctorate in nursing required. The ideal candidate will bring to the job significant experience in nursing research, nursing education and nursing practice. To apply, or for more information, visit the position announcement at www.goshen.edu/employment. Goshen College and Goshen Health System are each committed to the development of a diverse work force. Goshen College is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite church. Administrative and teaching faculty members are expected to share this commitment

'Bicycle the San Juans' Celebrate the beauty of God's creation and benefit MCC. Cycle five days through outstanding scenery and diversity of terrain on the "paradise islets" of the Evergreen State, Aug. 4-8. For registration information, contact Ken Beachy at beachykn@monitorcoop.com. or call 503-634-2604.

Chaplain: **Brook Lane** is seeking a ***full-time seasoned chaplain*** to meet the pastoral care needs of our organization. We are a provider of mental health services that include hospitalization, outpatient services, group home and a school for special needs children. Our chaplain also serves as the liaison with the local church community providing consultation to pastors and occasionally speaking in area churches. Applicants are required to be graduates of an accredited theological seminary. A license in social work or professional counseling is a plus. Brook Lane offers a generous benefit package including health and dental insurance; company paid life and disability insurance; medical and dependent care reimbursement plan; 401K + matching percentage; paid leave days; and continuing education. For more information about Brook Lane, visit our Web site, www.brooklane.org. Interested candidates should submit their resumés to R. Lynn Rushing, CEO, Brook Lane, PO Box 1945, Hagerstown, MD 21742, or by email to chaplain@brooklane.org. EOE

Zion Mennonite Church in Souderton, Pa., is seeking a ***minister of worship*** who will collaboratively develop and lead services that empower worship with various styles of music and other elements. A complete job description is available upon request. Interested, contact Hunter Hess, 215-723-3592 daytime; email hunter@zionmennonite.org.

Roanoke Mennonite Church is a Christ-centered, Spirit-led, theologically conservative, 200+ member congregation seeking a ***senior pastor*** to lead an evangelical church in Eureka, Ill. The successful candidate will be called by God to shepherd and grow our congregation through dynamic preaching, teaching, counseling and outreach programs according to Ephesians 4:11-12. Blended worship in a historic church with deep family and community roots. Tremendous opportunity for gifted preacher/teacher to take a committed flock to the next level of growth and beyond. Interested candidates please contact dazoss@speednet.com <mailto:dazoss@speednet.com>.

Director of nursing, to begin July 2008, **Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.** The director provides educational and administrative leadership to the department of nursing. Ph.D. prepared applicants desired, M.S.N. required. See http://www.bethelks.edu/hr/openings/ for complete application details. AA/EOE

Menno Haven Retirement Communities, Chambersburg, Pa., invites applications for the position of ***full-time chaplain*** to be added to the present Pastoral Care staff of three chaplains. Menno Haven is a growing continuing-care retirement community with 1,100 residents and 550 staff people spread over three neighboring campuses. Candidates should be ordained and credentialed as a Mennonite minister, with pastoral or chaplaincy experience and Clinical Pastoral Education training. Contact Ray Geigley, executive manager for pastoral care services at rgeigley@mennohaven.org or 717-261-2512 for job description and further information.

Eastern Mennonite Missions seeks ***full-time director of Global Ministries*** to provide oversight of EMM long-term sending. Abilities required: vision- and direction-setting, administrative, relational and public speaking. Candidate must have practical experience in and commitment to cross-cultural Christian witness. Begins Sept. 2. Apply by March 24; contact Jeanette Hunt at jeanetteh@emm.org or 717-898-2251.

Good News Fellowship, located in Ferndale, Wash., is a Mennonite Brethren church of approximately 200 attendees with a heart to reach their community for Christ. We are seeking a qualified ***lead pastor*** to serve as part of an effective elder team that provides leadership in all areas of pastoral and congregational care. Visit our Web site at www.goodnewsfellowship.org prior to emailing your resume to searchteam@goodnewsfellowship.org and look for the Good News Fellowship Pastoral Candidates link, or you may send your resumé to GNF Search Team, PO Box 1733, Ferndale, WA 98248.

Salem Mennonite Church, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alta. (45 minutes southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0; fax 780-662-0106; email cgfen@telus.net.

NOAH (Northwest Ohio Agape Homes) Foundation is looking for a ***volunteer couple, to serve as live-in house parents*** for a home in Archbold/Pettisville, Ohio. This home will provide shelter for people (up to 20) in transition as they work toward stability. This couple will assist with creating a community-based home, managing the day-to-day functions of the home, support the residents with Christ-based compassion along with providing direction and assistance as they take the necessary steps to move toward independence. If interested, please contact Norris or Terry at 419-445-5602 or email terry-triflo@embarqmail.com by Feb. 29.

Associate pastor (full-time or part-time) with a focus on youth ministry is being sought for **Covenant Community Fellowship** in Lansdale, Pa.; www.cc-fellowship.org. Congregation of 170 was a church planting begun in 1986, 40 junior and senior high youth. Contact dennisgehman@comcast.net.

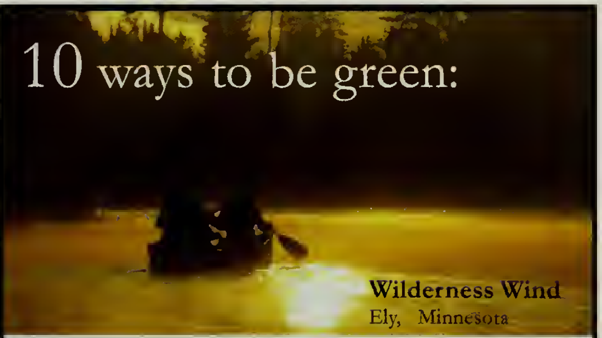
Bethany Christian Schools (grades 6-12; enrollment 285) invites applications for 2008-09 for two teaching positions: ***art teacher*** (grades 6-12) and ***chemistry and physics* teacher** (high school). Applicants should hold or be qualified to obtain Indiana licensure. To apply, submit a resumé and letter of application to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499, phone 574-534-2567; email akdueck@bethanycs.net.

Mennonite Mission Network seeks a ***bilingual writer*** to assist with news stories, brochures and power point presentations produced in Spanish and English. Also edit and proofread Spanish-language publications like *Prayer Vine* and *Missio Dei*. This person will be a committed Christian, active in a congregation and have knowledge of the Hispanic Mennonite Church in the United States. Proven communication skills in English and Spanish with a bachelor's degree in communication, journalism or a related field is required. For more information, see Staff Opportunities at www.MennoniteMission.net or call Linda Krueger at 574-523-3009.

Mennonite Mission Network seeks a ***Web content manager*** to develop and manage content for the Mennonite Mission Network public Web site, extranet and intranet sites. This person will be a committed Christian, active in a congregation and have good understanding of communication theory and strategies. Proven skills in writing and editing with a bachelor's degree in graphic design, e-commerce, communication, marketing or computer science is required. For more information, see Staff Opportunities at www.MennoniteMission.net or call Linda Krueger at 574-523-3009.

Spring Family Weekend, May 2-4 at Spruce Lake Retreat, for intergenerational family fun, fellowship and spiritual renewal. Annual trout fishing derby. Concert by Higher Ground also open to the public 7 p.m., Saturday, May 3, tickets $5 in advance or at door. Weekend package, $299 for family of four. Call 800-822-7505 (www.sprucelake.org). Spruce Lake is a member of Mennonite Camping Association.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.


10 ways to be green:

Wilderness Wind
Ely, Minnesota

Our relationship with Earth is not simply a physical one, it is also spiritual. Wilderness Wind **retreats, canoe trips, and church and family gatherings** offer opportunities to grow spiritually and discover God's life-giving spirit throughout the natural world.

1. Travel at two miles per hour.
2. Emulate an ecosystem.
3. Be below average.
4. Plant seeds.
5. Notice how small and yet how grand you are.
6. Foster a forest.
7. Consider "you are what you eat".
8. Invest in your neighborhood.
9. Watch the sun rise or set.
10. Cultivate gratitude.

Come and let the wilderness teach you.

To reserve a cabin, schedule a canoe trip, or find out more about the top ten, visit our website at
www. wildernesswind.org or call: 316-217-1129

Go ahead –
raise the roof

MMA
Stewardship Solutions

Building a ministry sometimes means new construction. Or maybe a refinanced loan at a lower rate could free more money for your ministry. Either way, we can help.

Check with MMA first if you're thinking about a construction loan, a standard first mortgage loan, or refinancing. You'll find competitive rates, experienced personnel – and no hassles. Plus, your lenders are fellow church members. Another good example of how MMA provides stewardship solutions to the Anabaptist community.

MMA's first mortgage church loan rates:

5-year adjustable rate	**6.25%***
3-year adjustable rate	**5.50%***
1-year adjustable rate	**5.00%***

For a free information kit, contact the church mortgage loan department at (800) 348-7468.

*Rates effective Feb. 1, 2008, and are subject to change on a monthly basis. There will be a 1 percent premium on construction loans during the construction period.

Slow food: 'good, clean and fair'

Gordon Houser

We know about fast food, but what is "slow food"? Actually it's a movement, begun in Italy as a protest to the opening of a McDonald's near Rome's Spanish Steps in 1986. Slow Food founder Carlo Petrini, a socialist and activist from northern Italy, bemoaned the homogeneity and fast-paced lifestyle that fast food seemed to represent.

"Slow Food has evolved over two decades into a feel-good movement about taste, community and sustainability wrapped around a nonprofit organization that claims 80,000 members worldwide," writes Kathy Gilsinan in *National Catholic Reporter* (Jan. 11). Slow Food's core principle is that food should be "good, clean and fair." "Good" means it should give pleasure, "clean" that its mode of production and its components should not harm ourselves or the environment, "fair" in that food producers should receive an adequate wage for their work.

Many Mennonites have been promoting similar goals, even without knowing about the Slow Food movement, though "pleasure" may be suspect to some. With such popular Mennonite cookbooks as *More-with-Less*, *Extending the Table* and *Simply in Season* on our shelves, many of us try our best to eat healthily and promote fair trade and locally grown food.

Nevertheless, it's a struggle. It's the "slow" part that catches us up short, right? Who of us can take a day, or even a morning or afternoon, to shop at a farmer's market, prepare a meal, serve it and enjoy the food's flavors with friends over a long, leisurely dinner? Maybe once in a while, but not often. We all are caught up, to varying degrees, in a fast-paced lifestyle.

Such an approach may feel elitist, and that has been a criticism of the movement. Gilsinan writes: "While it is admirable to pursue just wages for farmers and food producers, people who don't get fair wages themselves can be forgiven for trying to save money on food, even if that means eschewing farmers' markets and personal contacts with food producers."

However, Kurt Michael Friese, an Iowa City chef on Slow Food's national board of directors, wrote in a blog last September that "love of humanity and love of the earth is love of the foods that make people distinct. Protecting that food, whether it is *foie gras* and caviar or bread and salt, is not an act of elitism but instead of human love."

The Slow Food movement has brought together people from all over the world and raised a variety of issues. For instance, a meeting in 2006 brought 5,000 food producers from 150 countries to Turin, Italy, reports Gilsinan. Vandana Shiva of India told the group that every year in her country, "120,000 farmers, indebted to Monsanto and other agricultural holdings, commit suicide." She went on to call patent protection of seeds "food fascism." Farmers worldwide have limited rights when it comes to saving and sharing seeds. Petrini says, "No form of life must be patented."

The Slow Food movement represents high ideals from a large spectrum of people and beliefs. But it also connects well with Christian faith. Jesus, after all, was notorious for eating with "sinners." He took time to recline at the table with all kinds of people, both poor and wealthy. And he did not seem adverse to pleasure, such as when he commended a woman who poured expensive ointment on his feet (Luke 7:46).

Food has always had an attraction for Mennonites. The Slow Food movement has much to teach us about making our food good, clean and fair. And as people in a culture that moves us at a fast pace that harms our health and our relationships, slowing down to prepare and enjoy food seems like a radical, faithful act.

BEST BOOKS OF 2007

Falling Man: A Novel by Don DeLillo

In the Light of Christ: Writings in the Western Tradition by Lucy Beckett

Recovering Jesus: The Witness of the New Testament by Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld

Tokens of Trust: An Introduction to Christian Belief by Rowan Williams

Tree of Smoke: A Novel by Denis Johnson

BEST FILMS OF 2007

1. **Into Great Silence**
2. **Away From Her**
3. **The Lives of Others**
4. **Michael Clayton**
5. **No Country for Old Men**
6. **There Will Be Blood**
7. **Juno**
8. **The Diving Bell and the Butterfly**
9. **No End in Sight**
10. **Once**

FILMS

The Kite Runner (PG-13) takes us into the unfamiliar world of Afghanistan. Amir recalls his boyhood there before he fled with his father when the Russians invaded. Years later, when the Taliban are ruling, he goes back to atone for how he treated his boyhood friend Hassan. Moving at times, the film feels too summary at others.

There Will Be Blood (R) tells the story of a megalomaniacal, deceitful oilman who thrives on competition and eventually gives up his humanity. This stunning film includes a masterful performance by Daniel Day-Lewis. Paul Thomas Anderson is a virtuoso director who takes many risks and mostly succeeds. While its narrative holds together better than his earlier films, the ending is a bit over-the-top.

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly (R) is about the real-life former editor of *Elle France* magazine, who is left almost completely paralyzed—he can only blink his left eye. The diving bell is his body, while the butterfly is his imagination and memory. The film brings us face-to-face with questions about mortality and meaning.

the value and values of a goshen education

Unique core values
Goshen's Christ-centered core values are passionate learning, global citizenship, compassionate peacemaking and servant leadership.

Educational value
More than 60 excellent programs of study, with internships and research for undergrads and visionary study abroad opportunities.

Financial value
Our graduates typically leave with less debt than the national average; 99 percent of students receive financial assistance, for an average package of $17,555.

Find out more about Goshen at www.goshen.edu

GOSHEN
COLLEGE

Mennonite Church USA

Mennonite Mondays:

Start every week with updates on the latest Mennonite happenings. Sign up for ***TMail***— the free, weekly ezine with Web-exclusive stories and blog updates as well as breaking news.

To sign up, visit
www.themennonite.org

Or send your request to
TMail@themennonite.org
providing your email address.

Our 10th anniversary, page 20

***************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 876 15-DEC-09 35 31
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

J. Lorne Peachey was founding editor of *The Mennonite*. We invited him to write a guest editorial to mark the magazine's 10th anniversary.

That they may be one

Ten years ago, after I was asked to merge *Gospel Herald* of the Mennonite Church with *The Mennonite* of the General Conference Mennonite Church into this new magazine, I found the assignment both exhilarating and frightening.

The exhilaration came with the challenge to create one out of two. I have found few things I enjoy more than imagining something new.

The fright came because I was aware of how much change frightens us. Even the people of God, brought together by Jesus into a new kingdom, resist change. Admit it or not, most of us like most things as they are. We are scared of the unknown. We don't give up easily what we like.

Similar feelings surrounded a church merger I became part of five years later. My congregation, Kingview Mennonite, and Mennonite Church of Scottdale (Pa.) agreed to become one as Scottdale Mennonite Church.

Today, incredibly, I find myself part of yet another attempt at unity. The organization for which I work, Mennonite Financial Federal Credit Union, is in conversation with Mennonite Mutual Aid about forming a new partnership to provide value-based financial services to the Anabaptist community, a partnership based on cooperation not competition (see News Digest, Feb. 5).

Perhaps I shouldn't be surprised at the similarity of these three. While we joke about the words "We've never done it that way before," I've heard them more in the last 10 years than I care to remember. Indeed, I've found that cliché within myself more than I want to admit.

That *The Mennonite* has been able to work at bringing us together is a gift from God—and an answer to Jesus' prayer.

It's been 25 years since discussions began about the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church and 10 years since the new *The Mennonite* developed out of its two predecessors. Considering the hard work, the disagreements, the endless meetings, we ask: was it worth it? Worth the churches lost to the denomination? Worth the individuals lost to the church? Worth the bitterness of some who remain?

I doubt those are questions we can answer. Indeed, I believe they are the wrong questions.

Instead I am drawn to Jesus' words as recorded in John 17. In one of his longest monologues in the Bible—certainly the longest on any one subject—Jesus vents his deepest feelings about unity in a prayer: "Holy Father," he pleads, "protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one" (John 17:11).

Jesus had spent enough time on earth to be aware of what happens when humans face change. Not only did that resistance lead to his own death, but his chief concern before that death was that his followers would allow self-preservation and self-interest to destroy his church.

Thus he prays for something better for his disciples. You do not belong to the world, he says. Instead, you reflect the glory of God the Father when you are one, when you love one another.

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another," Jesus had already told his disciples (John 13:35). Is there any more apt definition of what it means to be a missional church in a violent, competitive and increasingly mixed-up world?

On the 10th anniversary of the founding of this publication, the question is not whether *The Mennonite* has been a successful merger of its two predecessor publications? It is not even how well it measures up to other publications or meets journalistic standards.

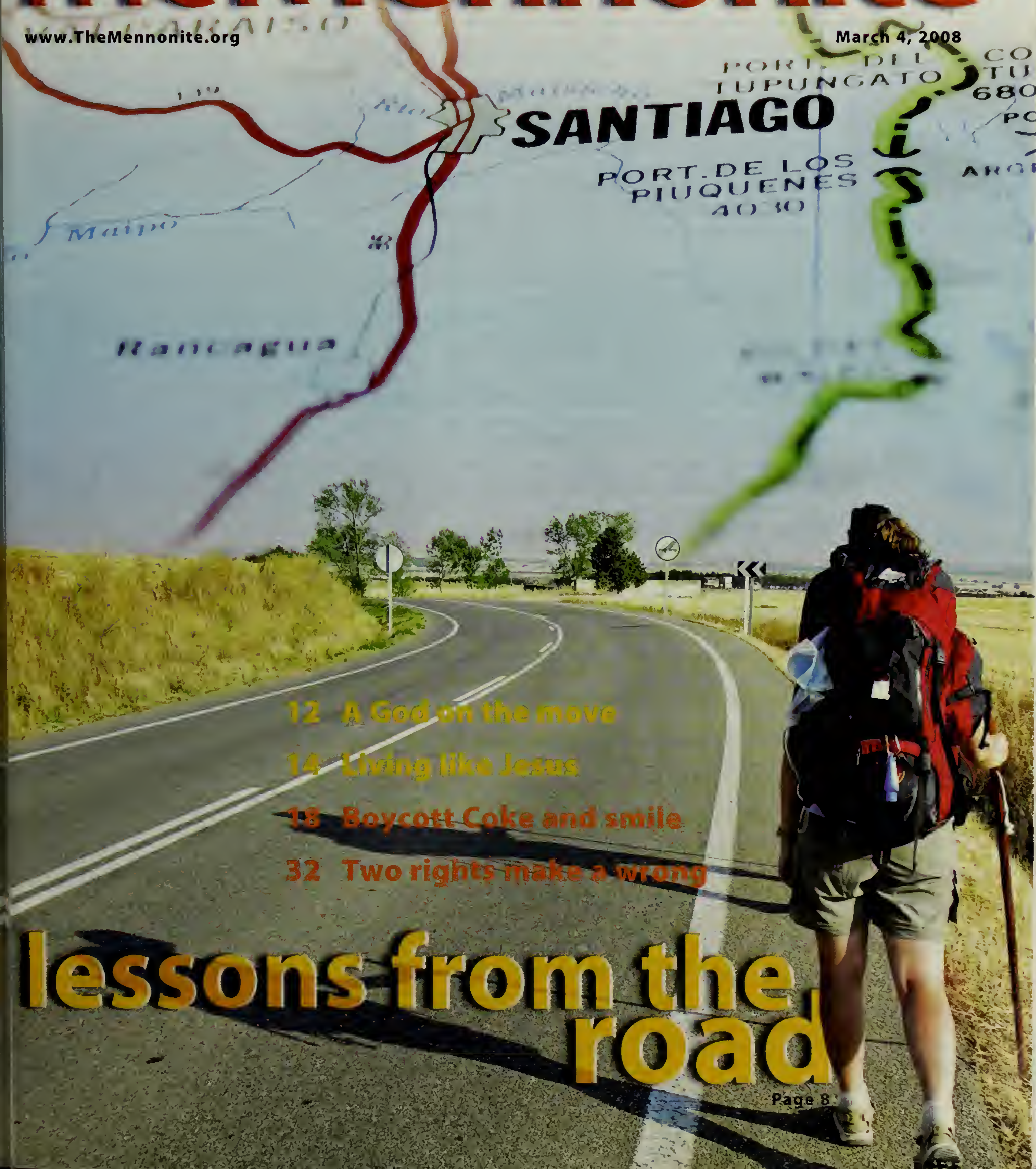
The question is: Has it helped the people of God, as demonstrated in Mennonite Church USA, become one, to express the unity and love Jesus so desperately prayed for?

That *The Mennonite* has been able to work for 10 years at bringing us together is a gift from God (there were predictions it wouldn't last that long). The challenge for the next 10 years is to continue to point the way to unity as we become even more diverse. When that happens, we are an answer to Jesus' prayer: that they may be one.—*jlp*

MAR - 3 2008
AMBS Library

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org
March 4, 2008

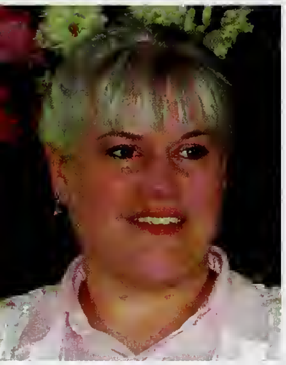

SANTIAGO
PORT. DEL TUPUNGATO
PORT. DE LOS PIUQUENES
4030
Maipo
Rancagua

12 A God on the move
14 Living like Jesus
18 Boycott Coke and smile
32 Two rights make a wrong

lessons from the road

Page 8

Sent with power



Donna Mast is co-pastor of Scottdale (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Climbing into the car, I tried to remember everything my husband had told me about coaxing the Mazda along the road. I started the engine, turned off the overdrive and pretended the automatic was really a standard, manually shifting from first to second as I made my way along. Coming to a stop sign, I shifted back into first gear, hoping I would have power to pull out into traffic when the time came. Thankfully, I made it to my destination and back again with our transmissionally challenged vehicle.

The church is to be a sent people, empowered by the Holy Spirit to tell Jesus' story.

When I told Conrad, my husband, I was calling our car "transmissionally challenged," he laughed and commented that my new term might make a good subject for this column. After all, Mennonite Church USA seems to be challenged with the term missional. I've been thinking about his comment for several months, wondering what I might have to offer to readers and occasionally chuckling over the thought of mechanically challenged me using an illustration that involves an automobile to try to convey truth.

I am intrigued with the idea that transmission and missional have their roots in the same word—"mittere": to send. An automobile transmission sends power from the engine to the wheels via belts, fluids, gears and various other parts. Mission has a variety of meanings, but the common denominator is a sending out or being sent out with authority to perform a special service. To be given authority is to be given power—a sending with power.

Sounds like something Jesus said as recorded in Acts, doesn't it? "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Jesus authorized his disciples then, and authorizes his disciples now, to go to the ends of the earth to witness to the truth about who he is and what he wants to do in our lives. We can do this because Jesus also promises power, transmitted to us by the Holy Spirit. The church is to be a sent people, empowered by the Holy Spirit to tell Jesus' story.

The word missional is the adjective form of the word mission. Much has been written about the missional church. It is helpful for me to remember that an adjective is a descriptive word. Missional describes what the church is to be. As we go and tell, the Holy Spirit transmits the truth of the message to the hearer. We are like the belts, fluids and gears in the automobile. If we fail to go out and tell the story, surely we are transmissionally challenged, for the hearer can't receive the message—the wheels won't turn.

Some are saying the church of today has changed the "go and tell" of Jesus' command to a "come and see" appeal. Have we grown attached to our buildings, programs and community of believers to the detriment of going and telling? If so, we are transmissionally challenged. Do our buildings, programs and community of believers support and enhance our going and telling? This is the picture of a missional church.

May we each recognize that we have a story to tell. May we be filled with desire to go and tell. May God be glorified as we obey Jesus' command to be his witnesses in our neighborhoods, in our parts of the country and, yes, to the ends of the earth. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 5, March 4, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

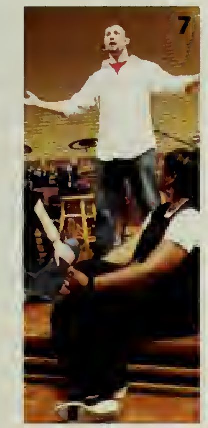
The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church USA

CONTENTS

12


7

24

11

8 Lessons from the road
People on a pilgrimage reveal a search for something they aren't finding in the institutional church.—*Arthur Paul Boers*

12 A God on the move
How do you maintain a pilgrim identity when you've settled down?—*Dennis Byler*

14 Living like Jesus
Most Christians, no matter what they say about Jesus, don't practice what he preached.—*Ron Sider*

16 Transnational, transcultural
Mennonite higher education—part 5—*J. Daniel Hess*

19 Breakthrough in Congo church conflict

20 Pastors discuss the power of testimony

20 Sexual wholeness is leadership theme

21 Goshen College receives platinum award

23 Feb. 4 march protests guerilla group

24 Kenya Mennonites struggle to rebuild

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Sent with power—*Donna Mast*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking out
Boycott Coke and smile—*Scott Key*

25 For the record

30 Real families
A family is a story—*Gerald Shenk*

32 Editorial
Two rights make a wrong—*Anna Groff and Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Photo illustration by Dee Birkey; images from Dreamstime.com.

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Dark night of the soul

Thank you for Dan Schrock's article "When You Can't Pray" (Feb. 5). Most helpful was his descriptions of meditation and contemplation. My initial thought was that meditation sometimes seems human-initiated while contemplation seems to bear the potential of being God-initiated.

There was a time when I could only repeat the name of Jesus, so weary of the struggle of my own "dark night." My posture: lying on the couch with a blanket pulled over my face and head. I wanted to hide. But God came to me with outstretched hands. Had I not contemplated first, I would not be meditating on the amazing love and mercy, grace and friendship of God. I carry now, within my being, such gratefulness that allows me such fullness of joy.

God comes when invited, when allowed to do what God knows best—without people's interference—and when action is called for, God leads the way. The challenge for me in the many moments of life is to be discerning, alert and watching, responding according to God's initiative, not people's. I only needed to be receptive first.—*Marjorie Weaver, Hopedale, Ill.*

Pastor's sister disagrees

When I read my brother's article, "A Pastor Questions the Bible He Loves," (Nov. 20, 2007), I was somewhat disturbed. The author (Timothy Schultz) is my little brother, and because our theological journey was juxtaposed in many ways, I knew him as an individual who never questioned the Scriptures.

Tim and I love each other, and I called him to get his OK on my response. He was thrilled that I was willing to interact with what he had written, and we agreed that our differing opinions would not interfere with our relationship.

I do believe, according to 2 Timothy 3:16, that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (KJV) and that all means all. If you begin to question the "floating ax head," to which he alluded, where does the questioning end? If God had control over the creation of this magnanimous universe, could he not also control that the Bible be created in truth and without convoluted controversy?

God's Word is steady, stable and able to withstand the storms of any and all scrutiny. If we begin to question the "stories" in the Bible and wonder which ones are myth, what insecurity can enter our psyches in a time of protracted unrest and turmoil? God in his loving kindness has given us his unwavering Word as a rock to stand on and a shelter to retreat to in times of trouble.—*Suzan E. Raimonde, Orchard Park, N.Y.*

Renew baptismal vows regularly

It was with great interest and appreciation that I read John A. Lapp's article (Jan. 8), and the reader responses to "Musings on Baptism." As I have researched and reflected on the topic of Mennonites, children and Communion over the last few years, I have also learned about the role and value of infant baptism in other Christian denominations. I have come to appreciate the symbolism of inclusion into the family of God and of the dedication by the parents and godparents to the faith formation of the child in their ritual of infant baptism.

I have also discovered that the ritual of children's dedication in Mennonite church life, that symbolizes these same good and important elements, has a longer and stronger history in our denomination than many of us presume to be the case.

Faith-forming rituals have not always been appreciated adequately among us, but as we learn more about how children learn and about the lively nature of children's faith, our appreciation for rituals, as examples of enacted faith, is growing. Thanks be to God, because enacted faith—faith that includes physical actions, symbols and sounds, as well as words—communicates powerfully to prerational children. Participating in or observing enacted faith rituals helps them form an identity that is rooted in God and the church community rather than in secular society.

I have participated in Presbyterian, Lutheran and United Church conversations about baptism that included challenges to the adults in the group to live into the promises made on their behalf at their baptisms and have seen how this ritual grows in meaning for them.

IN THIS ISSUE

A well-known hymn says, "This world is not my home. I'm just a-passin' through." The Bible describes God's people as "strangers and pilgrims" (1 Peter 2:11 KJV). Mennonites in the past (and many around the world today) can identify with that identity, but many of us feel settled. The discipline of pilgrimage, that Arthur Paul Boers writes about (page 8), can help us learn to depend on God's grace in our lives. Dennis Byler (page 12) writes about the importance of this identity in remaining faithful followers of Jesus. And Ron Sider (page 14) argues that genuine Christians live like Jesus. In separate editorials (page 32), Editor Everett Thomas and Assistant Editor Anna Groff, both of whom grew up in Lancaster (Pa.) Conference congregations, describe the rights that are at odds in recent ordinations of women by a bishop in that conference.—*Associate Editor*

We could learn from these denominations by emphasizing the renewal of our baptismal vows more regularly and fervently.—*Elsie Rempel, director Christian education and nurture, Mennonite Church Canada*

Find home for Guantanamo prisoners

In a Jan. 8 Readers Say letter, Levi Miller reports that two-thirds of Mennonites voted for President Bush. BBC reported after the 2004 election that the Mennonites in Ohio ensured his election. Has anyone in our denomination considered helping Bush by giving place, shelter and homes to those prisoners in Guantanamo he has tried so hard to destroy? He has been trying to find a country for them but without success. This activity can demonstrate a foundation stone of what we have said Jesus taught about how we meet people others declare enemies.

In our distant past we knew what it was to be without a place. That piece of our DNA may have become unwound, as demonstrated by our votes. —*Sanford Wyse, Archbold, Ohio*

Stop war by withholding taxes

If enough of us withhold from war and pay for peace, we can stop the harm. War-tax resistance is not a passive or unethical tax avoidance but an act of conscience that everyone can do. The cross of Jesus as nonviolence and compassion is our model for hope and change.

Individuals shoulder great responsibility for warfare and for peace. At times the most effective way to take responsibility is refusal to collaborate, as Franz Jaggerstatter did in Hitler's Austria in 1943. How can we take a stand against a government that leads its citizens into committing murder? The task is to be reform-minded, to live in an ethical way and progressively to make unthinkable the coercion of conscience by the majority who put their faith in military or violent solutions.

Like Jeremiah, let us unmask the illusions of power by being servants of hope among the vulnerable and wounded.—*Donald D. Kaufman, Newton, Kan.*

Pets treated better than people

Thank you and amen to Kristi Goering Hiltbrunner (Readers Say, Dec. 18, 2007) in sharing her concerns about "pet-blessings." Having seen poverty firsthand in Central America and other places, I, too, am troubled with our society's view of animals—equal to or above humans in care and in spending. Are we as Mennonites no different? Kristi, you are not alone on this.—*Dan King, Dover, Ohio*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

I have been on a (physical) Christian pilgrimage: (33 votes)

○ No (70%)
○ Yes (27%)
○ Not sure (3%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

The Mennonite will publish *OurFaith Digest* beginning with Spring 2008 issue

OurFaith Digest
Is there a new Modesty Movement?

The board of directors for *OurFaith Digest* decided Feb. 21 to transfer its magazine—published three times each year—to the board of *The Mennonite*, effective April 1.

"We are pleased to know that the ministry will continue to reach a broad Anabaptist audience," says *OFD* board chair Allen Brubaker, "with stories and photos that nourish faith, family and mission from the center of our biblical Anabaptist tradition."

Eugene Souder, Harrisonburg, Va., founded *OFD* in 2000 and served as its editor until July 2007, when Joe Miller, Honeybrook, Pa., succeeded Souder as editor. The magazine is provided free to Mennonite congregations, with costs covered by advertising and contributions. Miller will continue as editor of *OFD*.

"Utilizing the staff and systems already in place at *The Mennonite* for administration, production, circulation and reader response makes very good sense," says Miller, "and will allow *OurFaith Digest* to concentrate on its core mission—being an every-home Mennonite/Anabaptist magazine. This is a very positive development for *OurFaith Digest*."

The board of directors for *The Mennonite* agreed to accept financial responsibility for *OFD* and publish three issues of the magazine in the year after April 1. However, the agreement stipulates that a new business plan may be invoked after the first issue. This new business plan could include charging a subscription fee for the magazine.

"*The Mennonite* is owned by the members of Mennonite Church USA," says Susan Sommer, chair of the board of directors for *The Mennonite*. "Yet we know many of its owners prefer more inspirational material than is available within the format of *The Mennonite*. In assuming responsibility for *OurFaith Digest*, we see an opportunity to serve our owners through an emphasis on faith stories from some of the best writing in a Mennonite-Anabaptist perspective, continuing a goal of the *OFD* board."

Everett J. Thomas, editor of *The Mennonite*, will supervise *OFD* editor Joe Miller but plans no immediate change to the *OFD* format, design and thrice-yearly printing schedule.

"*OurFaith Digest* is a very different product from *The Mennonite*," says Thomas. "Its articles explain Mennonite faith to newcomers, and its content—which includes no news about Mennonite Church USA and its institutions—has a longer shelf life than does *The Mennonite*."

The board for *The Mennonite* was interested in keeping *OFD* alive because it has a significant niche within Mennonite Church USA. The People in the Pew 2007 survey showed that *OFD* is in 45 percent of Mennonite Church USA households. That is slightly higher than the 43 percent of households that receive *The Mennonite*.

The 52,000 copies of *OFD* sent to more than 1,000 cooperating churches also include those distributed to 54 Mennonite congregations outside Mennonite Church USA.—*OurFaith Digest* and *The Mennonite*

IN BRIEF

Goshen provost to retire, position to be eliminated

Goshen (Ind.) College president James E. Brenneman announced Feb. 8 that John D. Yordy, the college's provost and former interim president, will retire June 30. Brenneman also announced that Executive Director of Enrollment Lynn Jackson has been promoted to the new position of vice president for enrollment management and that the president will supervise campus vice presidents starting in March under a new leadership structure. All vice presidents will directly report to the president, and the provost position has been eliminated.—*Goshen College*

Choice Books sell 5.4 million books

Choice Books, an Anabaptist book evangelism ministry, set a new annual sales record by purchasing/selling 5,421,432 books in 2007, marking the 22nd consecutive year of sales growth. Organized as Life-Line Books in 1962, Choice Books first purchased/sold a million books in one year in 1991, celebrated the 2 million book milestone in 1997, surpassed the 3 million books in one year milestone in 1999, topped the 4 million book milestone in 2003 and reached 5 million books sold annually in 2006.—*Choice Books*

Chicago Mennonite school suspends operation

PITTSBURGH—On Jan. 19, the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center (CMLC) board of directors decided to suspend operation of the school for the school year September 2008-June 2009.

The board will discern the future mission and ministry of CMLC and consult with metropolitan Chicago Mennonite church, Mennonite conferences and other stakeholders as well as use consultation services of Mennonite Education Agency.

"We believe God will lead us into a new thing," says Sueann VonGunten, board president.

Current issues facing the school include financial difficulties (two-thirds of CMCL's budget must be fund-raised); Chicago public schools' improved education and CMLC's tuition increase, causing a loss of CMLC students and a changing CMLC neighborhood.

"Staff is having success academically and changing students' lives," says VonGunten. "We will continue to have financial needs for the rest of this school year. We are operating within budget but are carrying a $109,071 loan from past deficits."

"It's not that our donors have stopped giving, but it hasn't increased with the expenses and cost of living," she adds.—*Anna Groff*

CPT photo

Young Israeli settlers attack CPT workers

A young Israeli settler boy (one of three who sprayed liquid into Christian Peacemaker Teams worker John Funk's face on Jan. 12) chats with Israeli soldiers outside Hebron. Young Israeli settlers attacked two CPTers as they stood between a Palestinian man and a group of three Israeli boys. The boys taunted the man with rude remarks in Arabic about the Prophet Mohammad. A group of eight to 10 girls pushed, pulled and kicked Jan Benvie until she fell to the ground. The boys sprayed something in Funk's face that caused eye irritation. Two Israeli soldiers stood a short distance away and watched the attacks. A third soldier came forward to intervene only when the settler girls knocked Benvie to the ground. When the settlers attacked the Abu Siefen family on the evenings of Jan. 12 and 13, the Israeli military were slow to get involved but eventually moved the settlers away from the home. Authorities took no action against the settlers, but the Israeli police arrested four members of the Abu Siefen family and questioned them for four hours at the police station.—*CPT*

No additional discipline for Lancaster bishop

PITTSBURGH—Before Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference bishop Linford King ordained a second woman pastor on Jan. 20, LMC moderator Keith Weaver sent King a letter stating that the ordination would have "the likelihood of additional disciplinary action" (see News Digest, Feb. 5).

King ordained Janet Breneman at the Laurel Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster anyway. The LMC bishop board met on Feb. 15 to consider how to proceed.

LMC does not allow ordination for women, and a bishop board proposal to do so did not pass in a January 2007 vote by conference leaders holding ministerial credentials. King ordained Elizabeth Nissley at James Street Mennonite Church on June 24, 2007, and LMC sent him a letter of reprimand last August.

With additional disciplinary action pending against King after the Jan. 20 ordination, nine credentialed leaders from King's Lancaster city district sent a letter to the LMC bishop board advocating for King and asking that he not be disciplined further.

On Feb. 15, the bishop board decided to work at "bridge-building and uniting," Weaver says, "as the board seeks to determine an appropriate response." The bishop board also adopted a statement that acknowledges the broken trust between the bishop board and King, accepts responsibility to determine an appropriate response to this break in trust and agrees on the need for conversations with King for restoration.

King says he felt called to give his district—his employer—first loyalty; that is why he agreed when several pastors and congregations in his district asked him to ordain the women pastors.

"The congregations drove this," he says. "They said: 'We have done prayerful work and want to ordain our leaders. Will you do that for us?' I had to think about how I would say no to that."

King also holds a denominational minister position with Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership's Congregational and Ministerial Leadership.

King says that before the Feb. 15 bishop board meeting he received a call from Gilberto Flores, director of denominational ministry and missional church for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, saying that Mennonite Church USA Executive Board and Executive Leadership are "standing by him."—*Anna Groff*

Vada Snider

sical sparks youth ministry

t members of *Upside Down King* listen to Ben Kliewer, play-
Jesus, explain his upside-down teachings at Eden Menno-
Church, Moundridge, Kan. From left are Lowell Wyse,
hany Amstutz, Bridget Kratzer and Tonya Keim Bartel. The
inal 90-minute musical premiered in Western District
ference and was performed at seven congregational sites
anuary. With music by Doug and Jude Krehbiel, aka Road
s Travelled, and text by writer Carol Duerksen, all members
abor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., the musical raised
ds for WDC and South Central Conference youth ministry.
iences totaled 2,200 people, and nearly $12,000 was
eived in offerings.—*Western District Conference*

MEDA celebrates 3 millionth malaria net

WATERLOO, Ont.—As U.S. President George W. Bush witnessed the progress in the battle against malaria in Tanzania Feb. 18 during his African trip, Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) celebrated the distribution of its 3 millionth anti-malaria net/voucher in the country.

Research suggests that six lives are being spared for every 1,000 insecticide-treated mosquito bed nets sold. The nets also prevent serious illness that would devastate families.

President Bush launched the five-year, $1.2 billion President's Malaria Initiative in 2005. The program aims to cut malaria-related deaths by half in 15 African countries.—*MEDA*

MDS volunteers clean up after tornadoes

GASSVILLE, Ark.—Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) local and regional units have been aiding victims of tornadoes last month, one of which nearly leveled this small town.

Dozens of tornadoes touched down in Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee Feb. 5-6, killing more than 50 people and injuring hundreds more, as well as destroying hundreds of homes.

Wilbur and Mary Litwiller, MDS Region III directors, are working in Gassville with local MDS volunteers.

The Litwillers said Ted and Stanley Hostetler did a great job of organizing and keeping more than 70 men busy.

The Litwillers visited homeowners and heard their stories, including the owner of a trailer park where 90 percent of the 50 homes were destroyed. They also communicated with the Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Salvation Army.—*MDS*

Bethany students sweep MCC essay contest

GOSHEN, Ind.—For the second consecutive year, students in Suzanne Ehst's senior English class at Bethany Christian High School in Goshen have earned the top three awards in Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office's high school essay contest that focuses on public policy and faith. This year's winners were seniors Daniel Gingerich (first, "Planting Restorative Justice at the Grassroots"), Simone Sommers (second, "An Eye For a Mediation Circle?") and Emily Bowman (third, "Let Justice Roll on Like a River"). Between 40 and 50 students, from public and private schools across the United States, submitted papers this year.

This year students could choose from four essay topics: the Sudan conflict, crime and justice, economic justice and immigration, and faith and politics. All three winning essayists chose to write on restorative justice. Krista Zimmerman of MCC's Washington Office, notes, "The winning essays stood out from what was really a remarkable group of essays on the subject because many of them used creative, persuasive devices and personal examples. They also suggested interesting responses to dilemmas presented by the criminal justice system."

The winning essays are available to read at www.bethanycs.net/MCC_Essays_2008.—*Kevin Miller*

—compiled by Gordon Houser

IN BRIEF

Bluffton offers marketing major

Bluffton (Ohio) University is now offering a marketing major to interested students. Previously students could only major in business administration and declare a concentration in marketing. Housed within the economics, business administration and accounting department, the marketing major was created in response to both prospective and current student interest. "Our marketing major is the result of demand," says Bill Lyons, assistant professor of business. "We live in a competitive global market. To stay competitive, organizations are in need of individuals who can market their products, which means job creation is now in the marketing arena."—*Bluffton University*

By the numbers

- Number of jobs created by spending $1 billion on defense: 8,555;
- Number of jobs created by spending $1 billion on health care: 10,779;
- Number of jobs created by spending $1 billion on education: 17,687;
- Number of jobs created by spending $1 billion on mass transit: 19,795.—*Yes! magazine*

Lessons fro

People on a pilgrimage reveal a search for somethin

by Arthur Paul Boers

Halfway along my 500-mile walk to church on a Spanish pilgrim route known as the Camino de Santiago, I came one scorching day around noon to a hostel. The heat pressed down hard, hurting my head. That and the distance to the next shelter meant I'd best remain there for the day. After a nap, I wandered the streets. A young adult couple were at an outdoor café table. We had exchanged only a few words until then and knew little more about each other than countries of origin.

"May I join you?" I inquired. The man pointed his lit cigarette at a nearby chair. Within minutes, Marcus quizzed me about the Sermon on the Mount, even though he was not a professed Christian.

On the Camino I met many who professed to be "spiritual but not religious," a phrase that previously frustrated me. Now I admired my companions' pining for God, valuing of authenticity, seeking of balance and commitment to virtue. An overworked cliché speaks of the need to "walk a mile" in the moccasins of others. On the Camino I walked many miles with strangers. Simple, respectful companionship got me to listen. Meals, rest stops and walking provided opportunity for in-depth conversation. We had plenty of time to explore. As a professor and preacher, I proclaim a lot, but here I was called into a more attentive mode. Pilgrims were neighbors and fellow strugglers, not stereotypes easy to dismiss. Philo of Alexandria counseled, "Be compassionate, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle." Those words were true for all of us on that arduous path.

On the Camino I walked many miles with strangers. Simple, respectful companionship got me to listen.

m the road

ey aren't finding in the institutional church.

I found many pilgrims to be people of reflection and virtue. They wanted to contribute to the well-being of others. They were unwilling to settle for materialism or consumerism. They were convinced there is "something more," that matters of the spirit are vital. I often experienced compassion and care from others. Some—without professing Christian faith—carried Bibles. And most passionately admired Jesus.

Paul affirmed the seeking even of idolaters: "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you" (Acts 17:22-23). Can we name what is worthwhile about questers today and tap into their longings to point them to Christ the Way?

Folks were comfortable on this Christian route and reveled in religious art, architecture, history, rituals and symbols. Many visited each open church building, attended Mass whenever possible and appreciated pilgrims' blessings that were occasionally offered by local priests. Yet they also complained of the institutional church: its wealth and power, dogma and hypocrisy. Sadly, almost to a person they were disbelieving when I talked about Christian nonviolence; for people I met, the militarism of George W. Bush is now the face of Christianity.

Unmoored from the church, some liked conspiracy theories. There was interest in Templars and *The DaVinci Code*. Many had ideas about reincarnation, auras, harmonic convergence, crystals, energy and karma. Still these seekers thirsted and longed for God. Yet the church is often absent to such folks. This was vividly illustrated on the Camino when people lamented that so few church buildings were open. Many pilgrims wanted to visit. Yet most houses of worship were locked, and the few that were not often felt more like museums than places of prayer, sometimes even charging entrance fees.

The last church I pastored was in the country. Because of isolation, it always kept its doors locked. Yet occasionally people—not necessarily church attenders—came to pray. They stayed in the parking lot or ventured into the cemetery. We raise the threshold against inquirers when we only permit or expect them to show up on Sunday mornings for formal services.

Can we—along the Camino but elsewhere as well—welcome seekers? Can we not hospitably respond to yearning? Camino pilgrims asked basic, important questions: Who am I? What is the purpose of life? Am I significant? How ought I to live? Is there reason for hope? These are the very concerns that Christians profess to know something about.

At the end of my journey, I met up with Féliz. This 30-year-old pilgrim stood out. His thick hair was matted into long black dreadlocks, and he never changed his clothes, a T-shirt and scissored-off jean shorts. One evening I saw a hostel official harass this quiet man over petty regulations. Now he was suffering. He had a large, nasty, ulcerated sore on his foot that left him hobbling. His spirits were in worse shape. He had been treated rudely in the Cathedral office at the end of his pilgrimage. Officials quizzed him relentlessly, not believing he had actually walked the entire route. He decided to burn the certificate he received for traveling so far. I suspect Féliz received that treatment because of his countercultural appearance.

If we focused less on institutional power, protection and self-interest and more on prayer, mysticism and the spiritual life, we might still be heard.

How often the church gets things wrong. If we focused less on institutional power, protection and self-interest and more on prayer, mysticism and the spiritual life, we might still be heard. People told me they believed in God, matters of the spirit or "something more" but wanted to do so in a way divorced from the burdens and constraints of religious dogma and institutions and all their tawdry history.

Continued on page 10

In an era when North Americans complain of perpetual busyness, can we provide space for Sabbath and rest, renewal and reorientation?

Continued from page 9

Pilgrimages can be theologically subversive. In medieval times, such routes were also often a base for heretical evangelism. Nevertheless, it seemed odd to me now that so many non-Christians ventured on the Camino. Medieval pilgrimages—even heretical ones—at least went under Christian guise. But on the Camino people rejecting Christianity and the church walked a pilgrimage path that is authorized and still sustained by church institutions.

Curiously pilgrimages are increasing. Some argue that this form of devotion rises as church-going diminishes. Six thousand shrines and sites in Western Europe draw as many as 100 million pilgrims annually. In Europe, church attendance is low and dwindling; even so, the Camino attracts tens of thousands each year. In *God's Continent*, Philip Jenkins observes that the "continuing popularity of pilgrimages … refutes simple claims that European Christianity is dead," noting that pilgrimage may reinvent and reinvigorate our faith.

We need to listen to pilgrims, even those who do not fit tidy theological categories. Originally, Christian pilgrimages were popularly initiated. Ordinary folks would venerate a local martyr, mystic or miracle worker, and others come to be in touch with a manifestation of God. The wider church and its hierarchies got into the act of these pilgrimages only after they were underway. Then church leaders tried to channel that energy for their own purposes.

I wished for companions who journeyed in the Taizé spirit. The Taizé community is rooted in historical Christian faith and extends a listening presence to seekers from around the world. Its worship, Bible studies and meals make way for safe exploration and gentle gospel proclamation. Imagine a group of pilgrims committed to shared prayer and praise. They would walk the Camino, as that is the best way to encounter pilgrims, and would listen to other travelers. They would share faith perspectives as appropriate.

When I was in Britain in 2000, church folk were still trying to make sense of responses to Diana's death years earlier. An Anglican priest, Ray Simpson, told me, "It was the most extraordinary event of public ritual in my life." He quoted a bishop: "The people out there are not where we thought. They are very interested in the spiritual, but we haven't connected." Simpson concluded that church "worship has generally lost its street credibility."

A Camino pilgrim I met sponsors Rave parties in Australia that involve neither drugs nor alcohol. He was seminary trained but no longer considers himself Christian. He once was active in church, but several issues came to a head for him. So one Sunday, he stood up from where he was playing guitar during worship and walked straight out of the sanctuary. An important aspect of his work is the sponsoring of life rituals for people who are not part of a religious institution.

Do we offer worship and prayer opportunities for folks who do not regularly attend church? In an era when North Americans complain of perpetual busyness, can we provide space for Sabbath and rest, renewal and reorientation? Can we develop retreats geared for seekers? Their hearts, as Augustine taught, are restless.

If the church took pilgrimage more seriously, we might connect with seekers who still long to meet God. We'd be in good company. Jesus often journeyed with people on the move. It was there that he taught followers, encountering and evangelizing newcomers. There he listened to questions and concerns. There he observed how people lived and what preoccupied them. He usually was on the road, and it was his classroom, podium, laboratory and sanctuary.

It could be ours as well.

Taken from The Way is Made by Walking: A Pilgrimage Along the Camino de Santiago *by Arthur Paul Boers. Copyright © 2007 by Arthur Paul Boers. Used with permission of InterVarsity Press, P.O. Box 1400, Downers Grove, IL 60515, ivpress.com. Arthur Paul Boers teaches pastoral theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.*

The Way Is Made by Walking: A Pilgrimage Along the Camino de Santiago by Arthur Paul Boers (IVP Books, 2007, $15) is no mere travelogue, though Boers offers plenty of detail about the rigors of walking 500 miles along this pilgrim route in Spain. Instead he concentrates on pilgrimage as a spiritual discipline that has much to teach us about walking faithfully before God in our day-to-day lives. His experience taught him much about prayer, simplicity, confession, hospitality and solidarity. "Pilgrimage," he writes, "is religiously motivated travel for the purpose of meeting and experiencing God with hopes of being shaped and changed by that encounter." We can benefit from his insights, even if we don't walk that route. When Boers writes, "Being a pilgrim means changing one's lifestyle," he addresses himself as much or more than the reader. The tone of the entire book is one of honest confession. We have much to learn, for example, that "cooperation and collaboration, even trusting complete strangers, were the modes of operation, and they worked well."—*Gordon Houser*

Rock garden

by Laurie Klein

Because my dead are still
speaking, into the gaps
between these stones tamp
ragged starts of creeping
thyme, bordered with broken
pottery (cactus, a burro,
a lone rider) ransomed
from a backyard sale. Call it
a conversation:
loss, partnering small

change. Or rathole
their shine—the crazed plates
and mirrors, the orphaned
cups—all that is shattered
and disassembled. Forgo
the patted rinds of cement,
holding them close in the dirt,
and no mosaic cradles
the rain. Call this absence:
love, never reinventing its vessels.

Laurie Klein lives in Deer Park, Wash.

A God on the

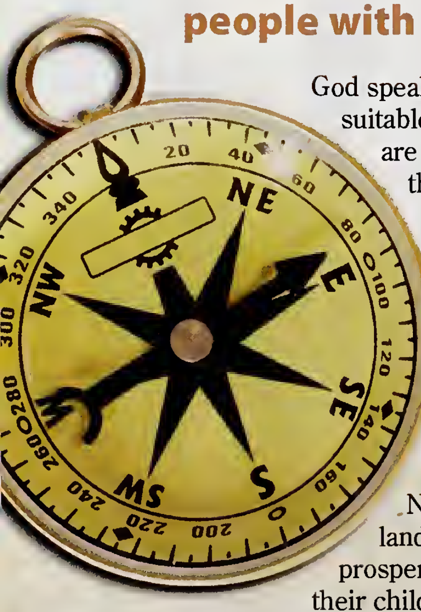
How do you maintain a pilgrim identity when you've settled down?

by Dennis Byler

The story that unfolds in the Hebrew Bible (our Old Testament) stands as a warning to all generations of those who worship the God of the Bible. That story goes something like this:

God calls forth an enslaved people that God liberates from oppression and leads out into the desert. The desert is an uncomfortable place, a place to pass through on the way to somewhere else, to a promised land, a land of comfort and sustainable life, where crops can grow and families can prosper. Yet in the desert that people experience God in searing proximity. A holy presence that lashes out in fury at unholiness. At the same time there is a comforting and protecting presence, a pillar of warming fire by night, a cooling shadow of cloud by day. In the desert mountains, God speaks words of covenant and commandment suitable for all times and places, for those who are willing to be a pilgrim people of God. In the desert, nobody cares about the land. The land is somewhere you happen to be today. It is beautiful and changing. With every step, new features come into sight, while others disappear. But it is not something to be possessed or held on to, certainly not something to fight for.

This people have had to trade in the promise of a land of permanence for the God of Pilgrimage, the God of a people with no permanent dwelling.



Then God's people move on to the promised land, and everything changes. Now they have a stake in the land, this land of their permanent dwelling, this land of prosperity, where they build houses of stone for their children and their children's children. This land is desirable and necessary and good to fight for. In these houses of stone they have invested their future and the future of their descendants, and from them they will not be moved.

Yet this land of permanent settlement becomes a land of entrapment by other gods. The God they covenanted with in the desert is still their God, but prosperity and settling down has its own rules, its own commandments. Inevitably, it also has its own, different gods. So they compromise. They worship the one and only God yet at the same time look admiringly at golden calves and beautifully carved idols, which look so harmless, so appealingly appropriate for a settled-down people.

Eventually the haphazard community of diffuse leadership, where everything must be hashed out among tribal chiefs, who then must get consensus from the heads of households—all the while needing to heed inconvenient words of truth from charismatic prophets and judges—becomes too difficult to sustain. So they revert to monarchy. The monarchy means military recruitment and other forms of enslavement. A king of Israel will soon marry into the family of Pharaoh, that same line of tyrants they thought they were rid of, back at the Red Sea. But the monarchy also means they get to hold on to the land and pass it on to their children. At first, it even means they can prosper at the expense of foreigners they conquer through continual wars of expansion.

Yet in an only-too-short time—as history goes—the whole scheme came tumbling down in a heap of ruins. To get a sense of the time involved, Anabaptists/Mennonites have already been around about as long as the "eternal" dynasty of King David lasted, before it disappeared into the landfill of human history.

Five times that long, 2,500 years, have since passed, and all this time this people have had to deal with being a pilgrim people with no permanent home. I understand that even now there are more Jews living in New York City than in Israel. Essentially, this people have had to trade in the promise of a land of permanence for the God of Pilgrimage, the God of a people with no permanent dwelling.

Once again, this is uncomfortable living: Queen Isabel of Spain committed horrible genocidal

Dreamstime.com

move

crimes against an ancient and proud Spanish Jewry in the 15th century. In the cold and distant land of Russia, pogroms broke out with distressing regularity. In central Europe, a ruler arose (with the enthusiastic votes, among others, of many German Mennonites) who would eventually hatch a program to exterminate Jews. The irony, in Spain, Russia, Germany and so many other places, is that they thought they could follow their God on the move, and at the same time embrace an identity as Spaniards, Russians or Germans.

But the Hebrew Bible is also our Christian Old Testament, an essential part of our Bible. And it is vital we recognize the tradeoff it is a clear witness to. You can't have it both ways. You can't settle down on the land and at the same time follow a God who is on the move. You can't maintain a pilgrim identity and at the same time identify as Spaniards, Russians, Germans or Americans.

My Swiss ancestors became acutely aware of this and left the beautiful mountains of their homeland for a new, wild land in America. My ancestors on my mother's side became aware of this again in the 18th century, when they moved from Pennsylvania to Ontario because Revolutionary War fever threatened to eat away at their identity as a people loyal only to God, with no permanent dwelling this side of heaven. The story of my family is typical of many Mennonites and Amish. Other Mennonites in America have perhaps even more dramatic—and often more recent—stories of migration and immigration for a variety of reasons. Some of our sisters and brothers in our fellowship in America were themselves born elsewhere and have experienced traumatic migration in their own lifetime.

Eventually the Bylers and Stoltzfusses (my father's family) and Hallmans and Clemenses (my mother's family) settled down in the United States and Canada.

I have had the remarkably unusual privilege of living for many years in three countries (Argentina, Uruguay and the United States) while growing into young adulthood. And I have lived the second half of my life in Spain. I have passports from three countries. I understand it is easier for me to embrace a pilgrim identity than it is for other Christians who live out their lives in a single homeland. But the temptation to settle down still pulls heavily on me. My grandkids are Spaniards, and I want to grow old here in Spain and have them at my side when it's my time to leave this life. Yet it is my earnest hope that they never cave in to the pressures to fight to defend Spain, whatever turmoil and upheavals the future brings.

I hope I get the chance to pass on to them the heritage of being a pilgrim people, with no permanent home this side of heaven. I hope God gives me the grace to communicate to them the notion that no land is worth fighting for. I hope I can pass on the divine insight that the shiny golden calves and beautifully carved idols, though seemingly harmless, are an enticement and entrapment that bring no end of grief, that it is better to be a persecuted pilgrim minority on the move than to prosper and grow self-indulgent in a land you would be willing to die and kill for.

Dennis Byler works with Anabaptist churches in Burgos, Spain, and is supported by Mennonite Mission Network.

It is better to be a persecuted pilgrim minority on the move than to prosper and grow self-indulgent in a land you would be willing to die and kill for.

Most Christians, no matter what they say abo

Living like

by Ron Sider

Dreamstime.com

Someone has imagined a conversation Jesus had with the archangel Gabriel when Jesus returned to heaven after the ascension.

"You mean," Gabriel said, "your whole plan to save the world depends on that ragtag bunch of 120 former fishermen, prostitutes and tax collectors?"

"That's right," Jesus replied.

"But what if they fail?" Gabriel persisted with alarm. "What's your backup plan?"

"There is no backup plan," Jesus said.

There still is no backup plan. God has decided to use human beings, not angels, to spread the gospel and change the world.

Gabriel must have been dumbfounded as that first crew set to work. They had little money, less education and no political clout. But they loved Jesus with all their hearts and knew he was the Way, the Truth and the Life for all people everywhere. So they defied raging oceans and roaring lions to preach and live Jesus' good news. The message spread like wildfire. Within three short centuries, that tiny circle of disciples had conquered the most pagan empire that ever existed.

Far more people have come to Christ in the past century than in any previous one. Christianity is the first truly global religion. As Gabriel pondered, though, an old anxiety resurfaced. Were the people who claimed the Name any different from those who did not?

How could the worst massacre of Jews in human history have happened in the middle of the continent that had been "Christian" the longest? How could Catholic Christian Croatians and Orthodox Christian Serbs massacre each other and Muslims in one of the deadliest outbreaks of ethnic savagery in Europe since Hitler?

And what of the United States, rich, powerful and where 86 percent of people claim to be Christian? Does their Christianity make any difference? The United States has the highest divorce rate in human history, 62 percent of "born again" Christians do not believe in absolute truth and the murder rate is almost twice that of the next industrialized country. Christians are highly visible in politics, but Jesus' passion for the poor rarely surfaces on the agenda.

Was Jesus' strategy for changing the world really working? Vast numbers of so-called Christians lived just like their secular neighbors.

As Gabriel peered ahead, he asked, "Will there be enough genuine Christians like the original 120?" That is the question. Will the people who claim to be Christian really live like Jesus? And what does it mean to live like Jesus?

Before looking at a few marks of genuine Christianity, let me make one thing clear. I don't mean that any Christian is perfect. We all struggle. By genuine Christian, I mean Christians who truly long to follow Jesus and keep striving for that goal even when they fail.

Genuine Christians embrace both God's searing holiness and God's astounding love. Our sins are too awful for our holy God to wink at them. Yet God's love is too strong for God to forget us. So God embraces our sin, absorbs the evil we have done into his divine heart and accepts the punishment we deserve—all because God wants to walk with us again in openness and reconciliation.

That's the only amazing solution to the problem of evil the world has ever seen. No other religion dares to teach that the Creator of the universe died for our sins. The cross is the only truly satis-

Jesus, don't practice what he preached.

Jesus

Christians are highly visible in politics, but Jesus' passion for the poor rarely surfaces on the agenda.

factory solution to the brokenness, violence and agony of our world.

God is Righteous Sovereign as well as Loving Father. Jesus taught us clearly that the awesome Creator of the galaxies is a tender, loving Father who delights in us calling him Papa. But the same Jesus repeatedly warned that sinners will depart eternally from this holy Judge.

The modern church wants to accept only half of God. It seeks to renegotiate God's revelation. It substitutes a new covenant and a new God who offers forgiveness without holiness.

Genuine Christians live like Jesus. They know who Jesus really is and surrender every fiber of their being to him. Some Christians worship Jesus as God and Savior but forget that he was the liberator for the poor, friend of marginalized women and a daring peacemaker.

Other Christians claim to follow Jesus as the world's greatest ethical teacher but forget that he is true God as well as true man, the only way to salvation. And most Christians, no matter what they say about Jesus, don't practice what he preached.

Daily, genuine Christians look into the face of Jesus and then, like a mirror, they reflect his glory and become more like Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:18). Genuine Christians live like Jesus.

Genuine Christians keep their marriage covenants and place their children before career. My wife, Arbutus, is a marriage counselor, and I don't want to be simplistic about this extremely complex topic. There are circumstances when divorce is legitimate, and God's wonderful forgiveness is available when we fail. But let me tell you about my Uncle Jesse and the woman he loved.

After five years of marriage, Jesse's wife, Lydia, became mentally ill and after several years of pain and struggle was taken to a psychiatric hospital in Hamilton, Ont. For almost 30 years, Jesse drove the two hours to Hamilton every two or three weeks to visit the woman he had promised to love for better or worse till death would them part. Then Lydia came home for three years, where she died without warning.

Uncle Jesse made a vow before God for better or worse, and it got much worse. But he kept that covenant, by God's grace, one day at a time.

Genuine Christians share God's special concern for the poor. There are hundreds of Bible verses about God's concern for the poor. Proverbs 19:17 says that helping the poor is like making a loan to Almighty God. Jesus said that when we feed the hungry and clothe the naked, we actually do it to him. And then he adds that if we don't, we depart eternally from the Living God. Whether we are doctors, lawyers, carpenters, plumbers, politicians or teachers, genuine Christians share God's concern for the poor.

Genuine Christians love the whole person the way Jesus did. Some Christians seem only concerned with evangelism. They just want to preach the gospel and save people's souls. Other Christians are only concerned with feeding people and passing better laws. But Jesus was not one-sided the way many Christians are. Jesus preached and healed. He ministered to the whole person. So do genuine Christians. Genuine Christians love the whole person the way Jesus did.

Genuine Christians confess that Jesus is also Lord of economics and politics. The biblical Jesus is Lord of the boardroom as well as the bedroom. Jesus cares about how you vote as well as how you pray.

The biblical Jesus is Lord of the boardroom as well as the bedroom. Jesus cares about how you vote as well as how you pray.

Genuine Christianity is not some little personal, privatized faith that applies only on Sunday morning and maybe in the personal world of the family. The New Testament dares to say that Jesus is now King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Genuine Christians embrace servanthood. Too often Christians have failed to combine servanthood with truth. Too often we have been more ferocious in attacking sin than gentle in loving sinners. At the center of Christianity stands a Servant. Jesus insisted that he "did not come to be served but to serve" (Mark 10:45). Jesus not only modeled servanthood, he commanded his disciples to follow in his steps (John 13:14-15; 20:21).

What would happen if even a quarter of the people who claim Christ's name were genuine Christians? Only God knows. You can dream with me by imagining what the archangel Gabriel might see in the 21st century. You and I can dream and pray—and work.

Ron Sider is professor of theology and culture at Palmer Seminary, Wynnewood, Pa. This article is reprinted with permission from The Messenger.

Transnational, transcultural

Mennonite higher education—part 5

by J. Daniel Hess

The Eastern Mennonite College (Harrisonburg, Va.) class of 1959, of which I was a member, came from farms and small towns such as Sonnenberg, Ohio; Salem, Ore.; Quarryville, Pa.; and Lowville, N.Y. At the time of our graduation, I would not have guessed that many members of this ordinary class would live and work overseas. At last count this included Belize, Canada, Cuba, Costa Rica, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greenland, Haiti, Honduras, Israel, Korea, Lithuania, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, Somalia, Taiwan, Tanzania, Vietnam and Zambia.

How does one account for service on a world stage? First, it's a legacy. Mennonites have been global wanderers, sometimes forced to hide from persecution, sometimes inclined to find havens to suit their lifestyles.

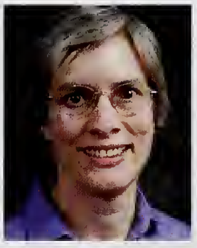
Second, it's a collective mindset. Relief and service have been two defining contributions of this small denomination—efforts that take shape close to home in times of local disasters or far from home, where war, floods, earthquakes or poverty cause suffering.

My passion for humanitarian assistance was cultivated at Goshen College. —Dana Graber Ladek

Third, the church's colleges, universities and seminary reflect the church's larger mission. Many professors and staff members will have spent a year or two overseas prior to their campus assignment and thus become advocates of international service. These same colleges have instituted international perspectives by sending students overseas for study and serve as a way of earning credits and by bringing internationals onto campus.

The results of these important influences may be illustrated by reports of many alumni.

Honduras: In the late 1980s, when I was helping a crew make a Mennonite Central Committee film about refugees, we visited a huge containment of Salvadoran refugees at Mesa Grande in western Honduras. The place, in isolated mountains, was poverty central. There we found David Martin (Hesston (Kan.) College, 1985) raising chickens. He and the evangelical group to which he was assigned aspired to give at least one egg each week to each refugee. His work was extraordinary, given the fact that water for the camp came from a dam 11 kilometers away. Daily he and his workmates had to repair pipes broken through hard use and sabotage. Further, he had to solve problems of tropical diseases. Directing David's work and that of others serving with MCC was Linda Shelly, a 1978 graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.



Linda Shelly

Korea and elsewhere: Meanwhile in another part of the world Ruth Nisly (Eastern Mennonite University, 1959) was working with Holt International Children's Services on behalf of orphans and abandoned children of postwar Korea. The children's center focused its service on children who, for medical reasons, couldn't meet U.S. visa requirements. She worked with pregnant women, unstable families and foster families. Trips home were always as an escort for children going to adoptive families in the United States.

A second career has involved her major in English. She has taught English as a foreign language at Lithuania Christian College, Sichuan Province in China (Zigong and Pixian) and Colombia (in La Mesa at a Mennonite school).

A world citizen, Ruth's vocational choices have taken her to many other countries—India, Ireland and the Philippines.

Haiti and Bolivia: Barry Bartel, president of Bethel College, assumed that he would go directly from college to law school. However, general education classes and one of his three majors—peace studies—turned him in a different direction. He and Brenda, his wife (both 1984 Bethel graduates), went to Haiti (1985-88), where they were project coordinators of MCC rural projects in development, agriculture and health.

Barry Bartel

Upon returning, Barry obtained a law degree at Willamette University, clerked for Oregon Supreme Court Justice Richard L. Unis and then practiced law. But in 1998, the Bartels volunteered again for overseas work, this time with two children, for a five-year assignment as country directors for MCC in Bolivia, in charge of a multinational staff of 70.

Why were the Bartels willing to set aside their local routines and responsibilities for international service? Barry mentioned the family members and friends who modeled for him and his wife the giving of service. Bethel College then built on that foundation with courses, campus guests and the strong sense of community, all of which placed a high value on service.

Puerto Rico: Cross-cultural perspectives are often provided by students who come to our campuses from other cultures and countries. Spanish-speaking Rigoberto Negron (Eastern Mennonite Seminary, 1995) brought to EMS the vigor of his Puerto Rican heritage and a new faith in Jesus Christ.

"Those years [at EMS] have been among the three best years of my life," says Rigoberto, now pastor of Iglesia Menonita del Cordero in Brownsville, Texas.

Rigoberto Negron tells of the class on preaching in which he was permitted to deliver his first sermon in Spanish.

His arrival preceded by one year the addition of another Puerto Rican native, José Ortiz, to the EMU/EMS faculty.

Rigoberto recalls trying to learn both English and Greek at the same time. He remembers when class members were put into small groups for discussion, and he struggled to understand what was being said in his group because of the English din in the room. He remembers a faculty member accommodating his slower reading of English by changing the reading assignment for him from number of pages to number of hours. He tells of the class on preaching in which he was permitted to deliver his first sermon in Spanish.

He speaks of appreciation for faculty members who not only taught him but supported him with pastoral counseling. Meanwhile, he could share with them what it meant for his parents and his own family to come to faith.

Rigoberto is now positioned to continue a cross-cultural ministry inasmuch as his church door is knocked on daily by people from Mexico and Central America, seeking sanctuary and solace.

Jordan: Reports such as these may lead to a question, "More precisely, how do transnational, transcultural perspectives get inside a student?" One answer is provided by Dana Graber Ladek (Goshen (Ind.) College, 1997), now living in Amman, Jordan.

Dana works as the Iraq displacement specialist for the International Organization for Migration. IOM tries to assist Iraqis who have been forced to flee their homes. "We assess their needs and provide emergency distributions of food, water and household items such as mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets and hygiene kits." IOM also implements community assistance projects such as rehabilitating schools and health-care centers, digging wells and teaching skills such as sewing and computer literacy.

Last October, Dana was given the Decade of Student Leadership Award. "How did I end up assisting Iraqis 10 years after graduating from Goshen College?" she asked in her acceptance speech.

"My passion for humanitarian assistance was cultivated at Goshen College. At this small midwestern school, students truly learn to be global citizens. Like many of the people here today, I attended the Study Service Term. I spent a semester in Costa Rica, where I worked with children. I fell in love with working and living in a foreign country, learning the language and embracing the culture. What an opportunity! Few colleges provide such an experience for their students.

"This cross-cultural experience embodies Goshen College's motto, 'Culture for Service,' and one can find it in the classrooms and campus in addition to overseas. The environment on campus encourages exploration and cultural understanding. While at Goshen, I remember dancing to salsa music in the dorms, eating rice and curry cooked by my Indian friends and exploring the culture of my own Mennonite heritage. I felt like I was part of a close-knit community not only on campus but one that extended globally. And professors bring their lifetime of experiences to the campus, where they take a personal interest in their students. The environment on campus also fosters spiritual growth and encourages students to explore what their faith and beliefs mean to them.

"When I graduated from Goshen, the 'Culture for Service' motto stuck with me."

Last year, the presidents of six institutions of Mennonite higher education said, "Mennonites are world Christians. Our campuses are transnational in scope and multicultural by conviction and presence. We believe great minds think differently and that encountering those differences prepares our students to serve the world community and boldly advocate for a Christian worldview."

J. Daniel Hess is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. This is the fifth of six articles on Mennonite higher education.

Boycott Coke and smile

Scott Key teaches at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific University. He is a member of Mennonite Community Church in Fresno.

Image is everything. Whether you are a startup company or a multinational corporation, instant recognition is desired and increases market share. Nike's trademark is the swoosh, McDonald's is the golden arches, Coca-Cola's is the red and white swirl. Corporations will do anything to keep their images untarnished in order to increase their profits and shareholder return.

Some corporations combine visual symbols with catchy jingles to embed their image into the consciousness of the consumer. Coca-Cola® does this better than any other corporation and has succeeded in conveying themselves as the world's beverage bringing peace and harmony.

But does image match reality?

With more than a billion people living in hot and humid conditions, India was seen as an untapped market. Coca-Cola® bottling plants have sprung up to quench India's thirst. This all seems reasonable, but the production of Coke products requires the extraction of large amounts of groundwater. Since India has one-sixth of the world's population but only 4 percent of the world's fresh water, this is India's most precious resource, needed for daily living and sustenance farming. In addition, in 2003, a BBC investigation revealed dangerous levels of toxic materials such as cadmium in the waste from the Kerala plant. This toxic waste was given to local farmers as fertilizer, thus contaminating agricultural lands and the remaining groundwater.

If depleting groundwater and leaving toxic waste untreated aren't enough, the Center for Science and Environment found high levels of pesticides and other hazardous chemicals in Coke products. When the southern state of Kerala banned the sale of Coke products, the Kerala High Court overturned the ban because the government overstepped its authority. According to India Resource Center, Coca-Cola® has destroyed the livelihoods of thousands of people, but the long-term effects of exposure to toxic waste and pesticides is unknown.

These devastating production practices are not limited to India. The London-based antipoverty group, War on Want, reports similar practices in Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Panama. Beyond these practices, Coca-Cola® is involved in suppressing unions in Colombia, Indonesia and Turkey. It appears that Coca-Cola® was complicit in the murder of seven union leaders who worked in Colombian bottling plants. SINALTRINAL, the targeted union, reported that paramilitary troops shot these workers. Coca-Cola® has denied responsibility and rejected calls for an independent inquiry. According to United Students Against Sweatshops, workers in Indonesia and Turkey have been fired for openly working to form unions.

Coca-Cola® has done little to change its practices despite protests and legal challenges. The corporation has even ignored shareholder resolutions to become more socially responsible. Instead of bringing peace and harmony, Coca-Cola® puts profits and shareholder return before people.

Boycotts work. Nike® was guilty of unfair labor practices, but consumer pressure led to changes, such as paying workers a living wage. The corporation was able to polish their tarnished swoosh by becoming more socially responsible. While some corporations choose systemic change, others simply placate consumers and bide their time. Consumers matter. Boycotts work, but vigilance is needed.

We are called "to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Jesus cared for people; he fed, healed and loved people of all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. We are to do the same, and "in everything do to others as you would have them do to you" (Matthew 7:12). The damage Coca-Cola® does may not touch us directly, but Jesus tells us that we are the light of the world, and light illumines the darkness (Matthew 5:14-16).

What can you do?

First, stop drinking Coke products. Second, encourage others to join you in a personal boycott. Third, encourage institutions and organizations you are associated with, such as Mennonite schools, to ban Coke.

Institutions and individuals can come up with many rationales for not doing the right thing. Should my institution, Fresno Pacific University, break its contract, pay the penalties and ban Coke? Absolutely. I invite you to join me in boycotting Coke products, and together perhaps we can teach the world to sing in more perfect harmony.

A list of products can be found at www.thecoca-colacompany.com/brands/brandlist.html. TM

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **The Lamb of God**—Everett J. Thomas
- **It isn't over until ...**—Ken Gibble

Breakthrough in Congo church conflict

Two sides agree to resolve Communauté Mennonite au Congo 2004 election.

Apostle Paul's call to the Corinthian church, "Make room in your hearts for each other," summarizes both the challenge for and the achievement of a major mediation encounter between leaders of the Communauté Mennonite au Congo (CMCo) held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Feb. 8-9.

CMCo participants were Adolphe Komuesa, current national president, Fimbo Ganvunze, past national president, and Ambroise Kabeya, president for the province of Eastern Kasai.

The Eglise du Christ au Congo (EEC)—the national Protestant ecumenical council in Congo—was represented by Mwenelwata Milenge, general secretary. Pakisa Tshimika, Mennonite World Conference associate general secretary, and Tim Lind, coordinator of church-to-church relations, participated on behalf of MWC.

The conflict was based on a challenge to the legality of the 2004 CMCo Elective Assembly at which Komuesa was elected as president and legal representative. The challenge was led by Kabeya, who was one of the candidates for the position of CMCo president.

In a memo addressed to the church leadership and the Congolese government, Kabeya and several other CMCo members from the provinces of Western and Eastern Kasai, leveled the accusation that the election process had not been constitutional and that the church had not taken seriously their longstanding request for provincial autonomy and better representation in decision-making structures of the church.

An additional conflict concerning allegations of financial mismanagement and misappropriation against Fimbo Ganvunze overlaid the initial conflict.

After several internal efforts to resolve the conflict had failed, CMCo appealed to MWC and the ECC for assistance. MWC staff and officers have given attention to the conflict for the past two years but until now have not had success in bringing together all the parties involved in the conflict.

MWC officers initiated another attempt during their January meeting in Mainz, Germany, with a letter addressed to all the parties inviting them to a face-to-face meeting in Kinshasa. MWC and ECC jointly moderated the gathering that brought together three leaders of this 100,000-member church, where disputes have created significant stress and division.

After two days of deliberations, the group signed a joint declaration that commits all parties, under the guarantee and ongoing guidance of MWC and ECC, to a process that will address individual grievances as well as structural and administrative issues identified by the group.

Adolphe Komuesa

At the beginning of the gathering, Milenge said, "Once you have made a place for each other in your hearts, it will be difficult for you to take hurtful actions against each other." At the end of the meeting, those involved in the conflict asked for each other's forgiveness.

"It is clear from what we have accomplished that you have made room for each other in your hearts," Milenge said. "It is not a small thing that we have accomplished here together."

The declaration of the meeting calls upon MWC and ECC to set up a commission to work together with CMCo toward resolving outstanding personal, structural and administrative issues.

The final agreement also called for the following:

1. The unity of CMCo be considered a priority by all members of the church. As a result, both leaders and members are encouraged to abstain from destructive and provocative language.
2. The structural issues raised by members from Eastern Kasai will be referred to the commission to be organized by MWC and ECC for study and proposed solutions.
3. Church leaders will no longer appeal to political, administrative or judicial authorities of the state to resolve differences within the church.

> **Once you have made a place for each other in your hearts, it will be difficult for you to take hurtful actions against each other.**
> —Mwenelwata Milenge

4. CMCo leadership and members will always defer to the church for solutions to conflicts within its structures and among its members.

By the end of the encounter there was a feeling of optimism among the participants, based on the recognition that significant change had taken place in the individual positions of each of the parties.

"I felt today like it was Pentecost with the only difference that I did not hear people speak in tongues," Tshimika said.

Lind said it is easy to be cautious, skeptical or even cynical about the lasting effect of such a meeting.

"We are not naïve," he said. "We know there are huge challenges ahead. But the progress made shows that positions that appear to be frozen can be melted."—*Mennonite World Conference*

Pastors discuss the power of testimony

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's pastors week looks at storytelling.

Testimony is a narrative of events and a confession of beliefs. —Arthur Paul Boers

Why are we reluctant to tell others about God's presence in our lives? How can we give testimony in ways that are meaningful both to us and to listeners?

These are questions that participants and faculty explored at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's (AMBS) annual Pastors Week, held Jan. 28-31 in Elkhart, Ind.

Arthur Paul Boers (see his article on page 8), AMBS associate professor of pastoral theology, set the stage for the week: "Testimony is a narrative of events and a confession of beliefs. … We need to tell the story."

As we tell our stories, we fit them into a larger framework that gives meaning to our lives, into a metanarrative, Boers explained to the 180 participants. "Christians live by the biblical metanarrative. … Being and becoming Christian means adopting and being adopted by God's story."

Learning the larger story and the language of our own stories happens in the church, said Ben Ollenburger, AMBS professor of biblical theology.

"Corporate worship provides the language and context for testimony, and it elicits testimony—or it should," Ollenburger said.

Alan Kreider, AMBS associate professor of church history and mission, suggested reasons we have become silent about our faith. When Christianity was accepted by the Roman empire, there was no need for testimony; everyone was assumed to be Christian. Later, the Enlightenment brought toleration of differing beliefs, and Christian faith became a private matter. Today, in "Mennonite Christendom," Kreider said, "most of the people we have relationships with are Mennonite."

Some necessary steps, Kreider said, are to develop relationships and friendships. "We can share our faith only when we have a relationship of trust."

Rebecca Slough, AMBS academic dean and associate professor of worship and the arts, also suggested ways to proceed. We need to practice a basic repertoire of testimony, she said, in much the same way we practice other skills.

"You don't have to wait until the technique is perfect in order to use it. We grow by using it," she said.—*Mary Klassen of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary*

Sexual wholeness is leadership theme

Eastern Mennonite Seminary event calls for safe places to discuss sexuality.

We tend not to talk about sexuality until problems arise. —Sharon Wyse Miller

Although a risky subject, the theme of the School for Leadership Training held, Jan. 21-24 at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., "Embodying Sexual Wholeness in a Broken World," helped pastors better understand sexuality.

The theme is exactly what Sharon Wyse Miller, pastor at Ambler (Pa.) Mennonite Church, has been working on with her congregation, which was in crisis regarding a sexual offender released from prison who wanted to attend their church.

"We tend not to talk about sexuality until problems arise," said Miller. "As pastors, it is important to help our churches get in touch with wholesome, beautiful sexuality that is a part of who we are as created beings of God."

At the opening session, David Boshart, pastor of West Union Mennonite Church in Parnell, Iowa, encouraged participants to tell new stories about sex and sexuality in the church.

"Too often the story the church tells about sex is a reaction to the culture, instead of a story of healthy, whole sexuality that can be present in the church," he said.

The conference focused on sexual brokenness. Brenda Martin Hurst, pastor at Frazer (Pa.) Mennonite Church, reminded participants that "we are all created in God's image and created good, and that includes our sexuality."

Annmarie Early, professor of counseling at Eastern Mennonite University, gave pastors an overview of attachment theory, a counseling model that addresses one of the most basic human questions: Will you be there for me when I really need you? Early encouraged leaders to imagine a church that says, "I will be here for you when you really need me, no matter what."

Joann Hershberger Henderson, a counselor, asked, "How can we create safe and consecrated space in churches to talk about healthy sexuality? The counseling office is one way, but I'm looking for other ways, too."

Keith Graber Miller, professor of Bible and religion at Goshen (Ind.) College, encouraged participants to move beyond talking about the negative aspects of sexuality to include a whole picture of our sexuality. "Incarnation means that God became flesh and therefore it is good that we are also flesh," he said.—*Laura Lehman Amstutz of Eastern Mennonite Seminary*

Goshen College receives platinum award

Rieth Village is first Indiana building to receive top national LEED rating.

On Feb. 11 the Indiana Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) announced Indiana's first platinum-rated LEED building—Goshen (Ind.) College's Rieth Village at the Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center.

Rieth Village, an ecological field station for undergraduate environmental study, received the Platinum Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating—the U.S. Green Building Council's highest honor for environmentally sustainable building design.

Rieth Village was the 42nd building in the country to earn this distinction for new construction. Rieth Village also is the only platinum-certified project in Indiana, Michigan or Ohio.

Buildings registered with the USGBC's LEED rating system earn points in the categories of energy, water, site, materials and indoor air quality. A platinum rating requires 52 points; Rieth Village received 55 points for distinctive features such as passive solar design, cisterns for recycling rainwater, tulip poplar siding harvested locally, solar panels and a wind generator.

Photo provided

Rieth Village, an ecological field station for environmental study at Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College

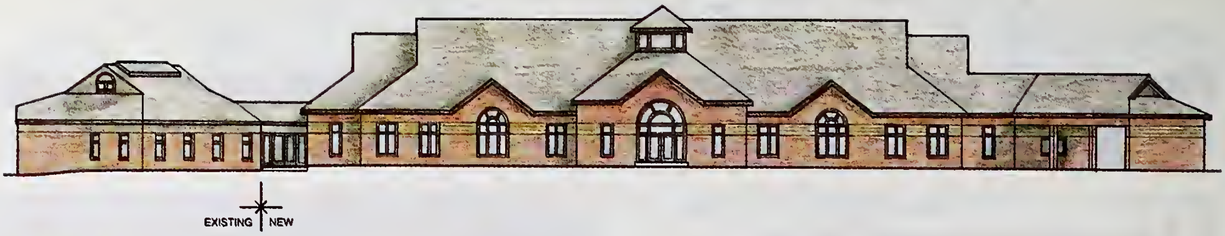
Rieth Village is one of a number of efforts to take climate change and other environmental issues seriously at Goshen College. Brenneman was the second college president in Indiana to sign the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment to work toward a carbon neutral campus. An Ecological Stewardship Committee, composed of students, faculty and staff, is now in place.—*Jennifer Schrock and Richard R. Aguirre of Goshen College*

Subscribe TOGETHER and SAVE

If you would enjoy terrific savings on ***The Mennonite,*** now is the time to form a **group subscription**. With our tiered-pricing system, groups of at least five members save more than $6 per year per person compared with the individual subscription rate.

Start your subscription today:

- Log on to our Web site at **www.TheMennonite.org,**
- Send an email to **Subscriptions@themennonite.org,**
- Or call Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498**



Architectural drawing of the proposed MMA building complex shows the existing building on the left.

MMA will build a new 'green' addition

Offices to include new bank branch for MMA's partner, Mennonite Financial

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is planning to upgrade its headquarters building in Goshen, Ind. The organization plans to tear down the oldest section of its building complex and build two new additions (see drawing).

MMA intends to construct green additions, pursuing environmental sustainability certification through a rating with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). MMA is currently seeking zoning approval for changes related to the upgrade.

"We need a major investment to upgrade our facility to meet our changing needs," says Larry D. Miller, MMA president and CEO. "We are planning to create a more up-to-date facility that can help MMA better serve its members now and in the future."

The building plans include a new branch office for Mennonite Financial Federal Credit Union, which became MMA's banking partner last year. Some of MMA's key goals for the facility modifications are to:

- Consolidate its growing customer service offices—now in off-site rented space—into its headquarters building.
- Create more efficient and flexible office space that allows for expansion. Currently, the office complex is overcrowded, leaving little room for growth.
- Build additions that receive LEED (environmental sustainability) certification.

MMA is working with Arkos Design and D.J. Construction on the upgrade. The oldest section of the current complex will be demolished. The facility changes, to be phased in over the next few years, are expected to begin during 2008.—*MMA*

The 6th Annual
Exploration into Being and Becoming Conference

Surviving & Thriving
In Times of Transition

SPIRAL DYNAMICS: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

featuring
DON BECK, PH.D.
CO-AUTHOR OF
SPIRAL DYNAMICS: MASTERING VALUES, LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE

Gain a greater understanding of how individuals, organizations and cultures function from the inside out, and be empowered to help them work, learn and live better. A panel of experts will explain the practical applications of Spiral Dynamics, including spiritual practice, theology, global peace efforts and more.

Schedule
April 4: 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
April 5: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Agenda located at www.prairieview.org
Tuition
Professionals: $145
General Public/Students (with ID): $116
Registration Information
Call 316-284-6412 or 800-362-0180
E-mail janzenj@pvi.org
Deadline: March 31, 2008

April 4-5, 2008
Prairie View • Newton, Kansas

Sunnybreeze Christian Fellowship

In Southwest Florida, near Punta Gorda and Arcadia, Multi-denominational, Christ Centered, Senior community. **For Sale:** a two bedroom double wide, and a two bedroom duplex. Also **For Rent,** apartment units and **RV Park lots** all with a beautiful view of our lake. Private housing is adjacent to our property. We have access to the Gulf and a private 18 hole golf course, a Welcome Center/Church, 25x72 heated swimming pool, shuffleboard courts, and many planned activities. Call Mary Jean at 863-993-0597 before April 1, or 905-477-4715 from April-November. E-mail is steckley@yahoo.ca
See our web site at www.sunnybreeze.org

Feb. 4 march protests guerilla group

Volunteers join Colombians in peace demonstration that started on Facebook

The streets of La Mesa, Cundinamarca, in Colombia were transformed into a sea of faces as hundreds of people marched for peace on Feb. 4.

Five young women—members of Radical Journey, one of Mennonite Mission Network's Christian Service programs—marched alongside their Colombian friends in a protest against FARC (the Armed Forces of the Republic of Colombia), a guerrilla group involved in countless kidnappings and acts of violence.

The Radical Journey participants—Stephanie Hollenberg, Rachel Voran, Amy Bradshaw, Melina Hunsberger and Karin Esh—joined their host families and students and faculty from Colegio Americano Menno, a Mennonite school where the participants volunteer, in the march.

"We all wore the official campaign T-shirts, and one of the teachers here commented that it was cool to see non-Colombians supporting the cause," said Voran, from First Mennonite Church in Newton, Kan.

According to BBC News, the protest grew out of a grassroots movement on Facebook, a social networking Web site, begun by 33-year-old engineer Oscar Morales from Barranquilla, Colombia. As members flocked to the site to join the group, radio, television stations and other media outlets across Colombia began to publicize the idea. *—Hannah Heinzekehr of Mennonite Mission Network*

POR LA PAZ
MAS MUERTE
COLOMBIA

Stephanie Hollenberg

Laura Kauffman and Radical Journey participant Melina Hunsberger (bottom right) joined Colombians in a march for peace.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS
FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED
THE CHILDREN OF
GOD. – MATTHEW 5:9

Goshen College's Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies program is built on decades of scholarship, a unique and nationally admired study-abroad program, a community that seeks diversity and Christ-centered core values rooted in the peace church tradition.

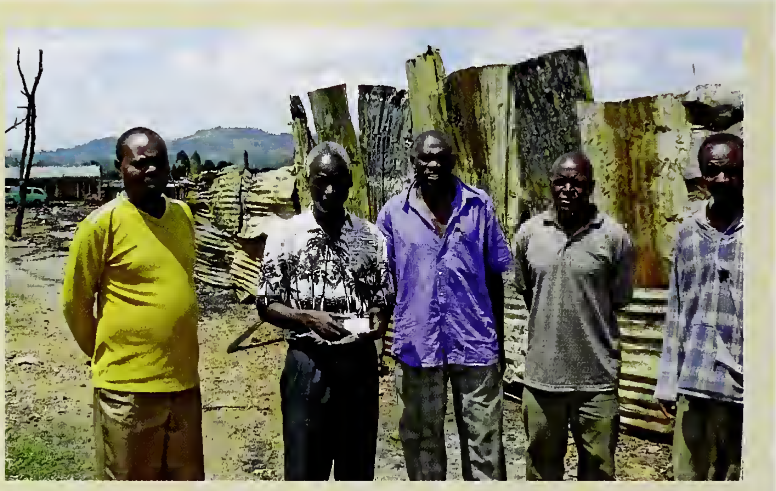
You might choose a major or a minor in a peace studies program, enhance another area of study wtih conflict mediation training, sign up for a semester of urban peacemaking study in Indianapolis, join the Pax or Eco-Pax student clubs and engage significant issues with guest speakers as well as your own professors and classmates.

We invite you to visit out welcoming campus to find out more – on your journey as a peacemaker.

GOSHEN
COLLEGE
WWW.GOSHEN.EDU/PEACE

Kenyan Mennonites struggle to rebuild

Eastern Mennonite Missions team finds Maasai Mennonites keeping peace.


Clair Good

Mennonite Church elders stand in front of their burned-out homes and businesses in Chipirete, Kenya.

As an eerie, hesitant calm returned to Kenya, about 20 Kenya Mennonite Church (KMC) leaders met with leaders from Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) in Migori on Feb. 15, to confer, weep and pray with one another.

Representatives from the seven dioceses of KMC and from the Maasai community of Olepolos reported on how their churches have been responding to the post-election crisis that has displaced about 600,000 people and left over 1,000 dead.

"Nothing like this has ever happened before in our beloved country," said Philip Okeyo, general secretary of KMC and bishop of the Nairobi diocese. "We are all grieving and in shock."

Okeyo thanked EMM representative to Africa Clair Good and EMM President Richard Showalter and Jewel, his wife, for coming.

"While others are running away," Okeyo said, "you have come to share in our sufferings. Others come to Kenya to be with the animals in the game parks, but you have come to be with us."

The Maasai leaders said that when Clair Good and his wife, Beth, had come two weeks earlier at the height of the crisis, the leaders had been encouraged to stand firm in their commitment to peacemaking in the community.

The larger Maasai community reacted violently to the news that the incumbent president was reinstalled after a disputed election. Members of minority tribes fled to the Mennonite church in Olepolos for protection, enraging some in the community, who began to drive them from the region.

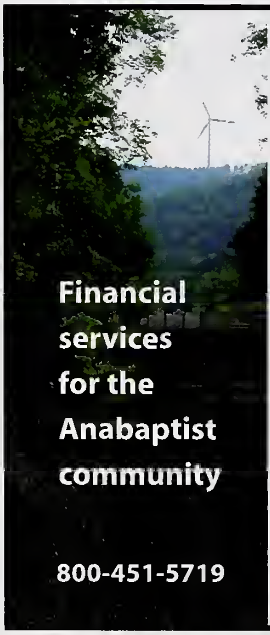
"When we tried to supply the refugees with food, the community reacted against us," said David Shunkur, a leader of Olepolos Mennonite Church. "We wavered but then stood firm in our commitment to assist all peoples regardless of their tribal backgrounds. We moved the refugees to the police station for protection and went around the community trying to calm people down."

Some Mennonites are also assisting those from their communities who have had their homes and businesses burned—adding their own funds to the relief grants from EMM.

Clyde Agola is pastor of Songhor Mennonite Church in the Kisumu East diocese, a volatile border region that has witnessed some of the most violent clashes.

Agola said that one day as he returned from working on peace accords with local elders, groups from both sides of the conflict, Agola was pulled from his motorcycle and beaten up. Only the presence of people in the crowd who recognized him and intervened spared his life. One of his friends rode off on the cycle, saving it from destruction.

"Many in your communities have lost their loved ones, their homes, their businesses," Good told the leaders. "Yet you have reached out in love. Has the presence of the church made a difference? From 1997-2002, when we worked with the Maasai in Kenya, there were numerous tribal clashes. But this year no one was killed in the communities where there are Mennonite churches among the Maasai.—*Jewel Showalter of Eastern Mennonite Missions*



Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Rebate for missions

We tithe 10% of our interchange income from Visa credit cards to church and mission activities and group. Since 1995, we have made close to $200,000 in mission rebate grants.

Rebate for missions: Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.

www.mennonitefinancial.com

CALENDAR

***Science Ridge Mennonite Church 150 Year Anniversary Celebration*, Sterling, Ill.**; June 7-8. For more information, contact Lila Ebersole, 815-625-2892.

Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg, Va., will host ***Teepa Snow***, a nationally known specialist in dementia care and Alzheimer's, on its campus June 9. For more information, visit www.vmrc.org or call 1-888-564-VMRC (8672).

WORKERS

Dellinger, William, was licensed as pastor at Mt. Zion Mennonite Church, Hallsville, Mo., on Jan. 19.

Graber, Daniel, began a term as intentional interim pastor at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., on Feb. 1.

Jantzen, Susan, was licensed as interim pastor at Deer Creek Mennonite Church, Deer Creek, Okla., on Jan. 18.

Miller, Rachel Epp, was ordained as pastor at San Antonio Mennonite Church, San Antonio, Texas, on Jan. 19.

Roth, Melissa, was licensed as interim pastor at Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, Texas, on Jan. 18.

Sandoval, Nicolas, was installed as pastor at Iglesia Menonita Ebenezer, Souderton, Pa., on Nov. 18, 2007.

Simon, Matthew, was licensed as associate and youth pastor at Buhler Mennonite Church, Buhler, Kan., and Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan., on Jan. 19.

Speigle, Wayne, ended a term as pastor at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., on Jan. 27.

Walters, Samuel, was installed as associate pastor at Grace Ubuntu Fellowship, Lancaster, Pa., on Feb. 24.

Wenger, James, ended a term as pastor at North Baltimore Mennonite Church, Baltimore, Md., on Dec. 31, 2007.

Wenger, James, began a term as intentional interim pastor at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa., on March 1.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Clymer Kurtz, Noemi Salome, Dec. 25, 2007, to Christopher and Maria Clymer Kurtz, Stephens City, Va.

Gingerich, Aila Faith, Jan. 18, to Levi and Kelly Keunnen Gingerich, Lafayette, Ind.,

Hahn, Miriam Noel, Feb. 4, to Josh and Emily Evans Hahn, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hartman, Marli Joy, Feb. 12, to Monte and Toni Graber Hartman, Elkhart, Ind.

Kulp, Gregory Michael, Feb. 7, to Michael and Mary Evans Kulp, Harrisonburg, Va.

Lengacher, Chloe Ameera, Feb. 11, to Meghan Lengacher, New Providence, Pa.

Mowry, Gabriel Lucca, Feb. 4, to Brian and Kelli Sieber Mowry, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

Nolt, Dylan Luke, Dec. 19, 2007, to Barry and Dawn Stroud Nolt, Lititz, Pa.

Nyce, Roman Wynne, Feb. 11, to Rustin Nyce and Kimberly Lichty-Nyce, Goshen, Ind.

Roth, Elijah Miguel, Feb. 16, to Brad and Alicia "Lici" Sertzen Roth, Warden, Wash.

Schrock, Josiah Andrew, Jan, 14, to Floyd and LeAnn Hostetler Schrock, Goshen, Ind.

Snyder, Anthony Ray, Feb. 9, to Ben and Angela Allison Snyder, Elkhart, Ind.

Stauffacher, Soren Asha, Jan. 12, to Lucas and RaeAnne LeBalle Stauffacher, Spring Lake Park, Minn.

Unruh, Teagen Kate, Feb. 11, to Travis and Tonya Litwiller Unruh, Peoria, Ill.

Veltre, Sophia Joy, Jan. 30, to Paul and Charity Nyce Veltre, Telford, Pa.

Weaver, Claire Noel, Dec. 8, 2007, to Jeremy and Joan Steiner Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Weaver, Isaac Andrew, Feb. 7, to Jesse and Laura Raber Weaver, Dundee, Ohio.

DEATHS

Bergey, Curtis L., 91, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 4. Spouse: Esther M. Bergey. Parents: Vincent K. and Maggie Landis Bergey. Children: Marilyn Halteman, John Derstine, Henry Derstine, Betty Kerr; 16 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 9 at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Blucker, Clara Miller, 89, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 9. Spouse: Ervin Blucker (deceased). Parents: Francis Sr. and Magdelena Wagler Miller. Children: Diann Grise, Vernon, Dan; eight grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 13 at Yoder Culp Funeral Home, Goshen.

Bontrager, Mabel A. Frey, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 20, 2007. Spouse: Perry J. Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Alvin and Fannie Miller Frey. Children: Mary Owens, P. Jay, Ruth Sellers; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 24 at Forks Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

- **Editor@TheMennonite.org**
- **fax 574-535-6050**
- **1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794**

MAX® is insurance

And so much more.

MAX offers more than home, farm, church and business insurance. MAX Mutual Aid Ministries is a program providing emotional, spiritual and financial wholeness to those in need throughout North America.

Yes, MAX is insurance and we're not afraid to admit it...but the value MAX brings to you and others, gives insurance a whole new meaning.

SUPPORT NETWORK MINISTRY
Join an e-mail network to receive emails of special needs throughout the community.
MAX SHARE FUND, INC.
Make a tax deductible donation to help other Anabaptists through financial grants.
INSURE
Insuring with MAX helps support Mutual Aid Ministries.

MAX® *Creating and Sustaining Wholeness in the Anabaptist Community* ™

877-971-6300 ● www.maxwholeness.com

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org.

Erb, John Leroy, 78, Hartville, Ohio, died Feb. 12. Spouse: Sylvia Otto Erb. Parents: Dan and Sevilla Miller Erb. Children: Sharon Reed, Gayle Brown, LuAnn Haubert, David; 10 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Gingrich, Virgil W., 91, Eureka, Ill., died Dec. 9, 2007. Spouse: Wilda M. Garber Gingrich. Parents: William H. and Kathrine H. Brown Gingrich. Children: Ellis, Dr. Roger, Ross, Jean Stutzman, Joyce Zehr, Beth Frank; 32 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 13 at Metamora Mennonite Church, Metamora, Ill.

Hathaway, Oliver Leroy, 90, Rural Palmyra, Mo., died Jan. 23. Spouse: Ruby U. Greaser Hathaway (deceased). Spouse: Esther Fenton (deceased). Parents: William Sherman and Mary Pauline Paugh Hathaway. Children: Howard, Jim, Janice Crist, Melvin, Dorthy Livengood, Lawrence Dale; eight grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 26 at PeaRidge Mennonite Church, Marion County, Mo.

Hershey, Clair J., 88, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 25 of a stroke. Spouse: Dorothy Mellinger Hershey. Parents: Clayton and Ella Buckwalter Hershey. Children: J. Allen, Carol Miller, Rosemary Miller, J. Donald; 12 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 31 at Hershey Mennonite Church, Kinzers, Pa.

MEDA EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

VICE-PRESIDENT MARKETING & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) invites applications for a Vice-President Marketing & Resource Development. MEDA is an association of Christians in business and the professions who share their faith, abilities, and resources to address human needs through economic development. MEDA brings hope, opportunity and economic well being to low-income people around the world, through a business-oriented approach to development.

Position Summary: Reporting to the President, this position is responsible for the overall management of MEDA's marketing and fundraising functions, including the development of a marketing strategy integrated with the product line strategies; direct fundraising, and development of new sources of financial resources including foundations, planned giving and special projects; and the increased involvement of a growing and diverse membership in all areas of MEDA's work. The position is based in Waterloo, Ontario or possibly in Lancaster, Pennsylvania with frequent travel throughout North America and occasional travel overseas. **The start date is April 2008.**

Qualifications:
- Senior management experience in business and marketing.
- A flair for creative marketing solutions and a track record in strategic marketing.
- Advanced degree in business and marketing.
- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written.
- An active member of an Anabaptist church and business community.
- Appreciation and support of MEDA's faith, values and goals.

Please send your resume to jobs@meda.org
For specific questions please contact Kim Pityn, Director, Human Resources at **519-725-1853 ext 19**

Imhoff, Sanford D., 89, Metamora, Ill., died Feb. 2. Spouse: Ruth M. Litwiller Imhoff. Parents: Samuel and Elnora Garber Imhoff. Children: Sanford J., Thomas, Becki Hartzler, Bonnie Abel, Cecelia; 11 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 5 at Metamora Mennonite Church.

Janzen, Caroline Marie Reimer, 84, Altona, Manitoba, died Feb. 5. Spouse: Jake Janzen. Parents: Jacob and Martha C. Madrau Reimer. Children: Elizabeth Harder, Alan, Mildred, Irma Bennett; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 9 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Kauffman, Juanita Kenagy, 92, Albany, Ore., died Jan. 28. Spouse: William Kauffman (deceased). Children: Avon, Joyce Yoder, Billy, Raymond; 12 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 1 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Kaufman, Delmer Dean, 81, Freeman, S.D., died Jan. 31 of cancer. Spouse: Ardell Woltzen Kaufman (deceased). Parents: Milton J. and Ida Miller Kaufman. Children: Jim, Joni Lowe; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 5 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Kenagy, Charles "Kelly" Edward, 93, Silverton, Ore., died Jan. 27. Spouse: Edna Fern Gingerich Kenagy. Parents: William G. and Emma Troyer Kenagy. Children: Darlene Blackstone, Curt, Karen Marquiss, David. Funeral: Feb. 2 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Kozel, Porter Silas, Harrisonburg, Va., was stillborn on Feb. 5. Parents: Nick and Deanna Steiner Kozel. Siblings: Deacon, Jude. Graveside service: Feb. 9 at Weavers Cemetery, Harrisonburg.

Krehbiel, Ray, 83, Freeman, S.D., died Feb. 6 of cancer. Spouse: Lillian Ortman Krehbiel. Parents: Philip and Alvina Kaufman Krehbiel. Children: Kathy Hacking, Randy, Kraig; four grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 9 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Kuhns, Gloria Jean Schweitzer, 72, Lincoln, Neb., died Feb. 2. Spouse: Raymond Kuhns. Parents: Dave and Verona Stutzman Schweitzer. Children: Doug, Chere McCarthy, Tim; four grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 5 at First Mennonite Church, Lincoln.

Litwiller, Elsie Susan Egli, 96, Kalona, Iowa, died Feb. 6. Spouse: Chancy Litwiller (deceased). Parents: C.B. and Emma Grimm Egli. Children: Francis, Keith; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 9 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona.

Martin, Clayton H., 93, Lancaster, Pa., died Feb. 4. Spouse: Zelma Frey Martin. Parents: Jonas and Lydia Hoover Martin. Children: Melissa Frankman, Sidney; four grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 8 at Akron Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa.

Miller, Glen J., 68, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 29. Spouse: Lynn D. Miller. Parents: J. Kendig and Anna Leaman Miller. Children: Shawn, Justin; one grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 5 at Stumptown Mennonite Church, Bird-in-Hand, Pa.

Neer, Ida Naomi Lapp, 90, West Liberty, Ohio, died Jan. 28. Spouse: D. Dwight Neer (deceased). Parents: Alvan D. and Jacobine Bena Augsburger Lapp. Children: Grace Leichty, Lois Coons, Philip, Richard; 14 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 2 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Noftsier, Newell C., 71, Castorland, N.Y., died Feb. 13. Spouse: Carole Moody Noftsier. Parents: Romeyn and Laura Moser Noftsier. Children: Darcy Pritchard, Tara Noftsier, Jill Knudsen, Chad; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16 at Iseneker Funeral Home, Lowville, N.Y.

Stauffer, Wallace Waldo, 83, Harrisonburg, Va., died Feb. 11. Spouse: Edna Beckler Stauffer (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Lovina Miller Stauffer. Children: Wade W., Jana Roth, Jane Stauffer; four grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Waltner, Ervin Henry, 81, Freeman, S.D., died Jan. 31 of cancer. Spouse: Edna Stahl Waltner (deceased). Parents: Henry Jos and Anna Waltner. Children: Derrold, Don, Gregg, Kathy Ferguson, Julie Krehbiel, Sandra Huston; 13 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 4 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Yoder, Floyd J., 85, Middlebury, Ind., died Jan. 28. Spouse: Janice L. Mishler Yoder (deceased). Parents: Tobias T. and Katie Stutzman Yoder. Children: Gloria Miller, Vicki Smucker, Sally Smoker; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 31 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Bluffton University invites applications for a ***full-time, tenure-track faculty position in restorative justice*** beginning fall semester 2008. Qualifications: Ph.D. or ABD in a social science discipline (sociology, criminology, conflict transformation, peace studies, political science, social work) or terminal degree in applied discipline (JD or MSW). Commitment to excellence in liberal arts education and to social justice. Responsibilities: Ability to teach a variety of restorative justice courses in the criminal justice program is required. Preference will be given to applicants who can teach courses in criminology, sociology, criminal justice and/or political science. For additional position details see www.bluffton.edu/about/employment. Compensation commensurate with education and experience within the university pay scale. Consideration of applications begins March 10 and continues until an appointment is made. Send letter of interest, vita, three letters of reference (submitted directly from referee) and official transcripts to: Elaine Suderman, Academic Affairs, Bluffton University, 1 University Drive, Bluffton, OH 45817. Members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. EOE.

Bethany Christian Schools (grades 6-12; enrollment 285) invites applications for 2008-09 for ***two teaching positions***: ***art*** (grades 6-12) and ***chemistry and physics*** (high school). Applicants should hold or be qualified to obtain Indiana licensure. To apply, submit a resumé and letter of application to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499, phone 574-534-2567; email akdueck@bethanycs.net.

Anabaptist Peace Center, Washington, D.C., with the Church of the Brethren Witness/Washington Office sponsor: ***Bridging Divides: Uniting the Church for Peacemaking***, April 11-12, 2008, Capitol Hill United Methodist Church, Washington, D.C. This conference for pastors, theologians, service workers, academics and laypeople will explore how the church can unite for mission despite political divides and also work to heal divisions in our communities. Speakers include Myron Augsburger, keynote; and plenary sessions with Michelle Armster, MCC U.S.; Chris Bowman, pastor of Oakton Church of the Brethren; Steven Brown of Calvary Community and Phil Jones, director of the Church of the Brethren Witness/Washington Office. Adam Tice, Hyattsville Mennonite Church, is worship leader. "How We Talk When We Disagree" and an MCC immigration update are preconference seminars. Participants will join the annual Hymn Sing for Peace, 5 p.m., April 12. To register and for more information, see www.apcwdc.mennonitenet or contact Keith Swartzendruber at 202-548-0010 or keith@apcwdc.mennonite.net .

Spring Family Weekend, May 2-4 at **Spruce Lake Retreat** for intergenerational family fun, fellowship and spiritual renewal. Annual trout fishing derby. Concert by Higher Ground also open to the public 7 p.m. Saturday, May 3, tickets $5 in advance or at door. Weekend package, $299 for family of four. Call 800-822-7505; www.sprucelake.org. Spruce Lake is a member of Mennonite Camping Association.

Western Mennonite School, Salem, Ore.; positions beginning August 2008. ***High school social science teacher***: Full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred with a major in social science. Licensed in or be able to be licensed in Oregon. ***High school Spanish teacher***. Full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred, with a major in Spanish. Licensed or be able to be licensed in Oregon. Application closing date: April 18. Contact Darrel Camp at 503-363-2000, 866-343-9378, or dcamp@westernmennoniteschool.org. Western Mennonite School, established in 1945, offers grades 6-12 to both local students and students from around the world. Located on 45 acres in Oregon's Willamette Valley, Western offers a strong academic and faith-building experience. Western seeks exceptional candidates with a heart for youth and sharing Christ.

Goshen College seeks applicants for ***full-time gerontology and medical-surgical nursing faculty position*** in classroom, simulated laboratory and clinical settings. Doctorate in nursing or related field preferred, master's degree in nursing required. Preference is for candidates who exhibit both professional and teaching credentials. To apply and for more information, visit the position announcement at www.goshen.edu/employment. Goshen College is committed to a diverse faculty and Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite church. Faculty members are expected to share this commitment

Central Christian School, Kidron, Ohio, invites applications for openings beginning August 2008. Visit www.ccscomets.org. ***Enrollment director***: leadership of enrollment program, student and family recruitment, admissions and retention. ***Librarian***: oversight and leadership of library and resources available to students and faculty. Contact Henry Beun, hbeun@ccscomets for additional information.

Eastern Mennonite Missions seeks ***full-time director of Global Ministries*** to provide oversight of EMM long-term sending. Abilities required: vision- and direction-setting, administrative, relational and public speaking. Candidate must have practical experience in and commitment to cross-cultural Christian witness. Begins Sept. 2. Apply by March 24; contact Jeanette Hunt at jeanetteh@emm.org or 717-898-2251.

ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE

ENGAGED · EVANGELICAL · ANABAPTIST

New concentrations: business, education, youth ministries

Accredited education at affordable prices

Spanish language cross-cultural term

Christ-centered community

Credits that transfer

SMALL COLLEGE, BIG IMPACT

www.rosedale.edu • 740-857-1311 • Rosedale, Ohio

Goshen College seeks ***full-time American Sign Language faculty member*** to begin August 2008. Ph.D. is preferred, master's degree required in linguistics, education, sign language interpreting or a related field, ASLTA certification or working toward certification. All applicants will be considered. For more information and to apply, see the position announcement at www.goshen.edu/employment. With a commitment to building a diverse faculty, deaf individuals, women and minority people are encouraged to apply.

Christian elementary teachers! Come to **Hopi Mission School**, a K-6 Christian elementary school for Native Americans. This is a delightful Christian adventure. Call or Email Betty Handrich, Principal; phone 928-734-2453 or 928-734-2211; email bettyhandrichhms@wildblue.net.

NOAH (Northwest Ohio Agape Homes) Foundation is looking for a ***volunteer couple to serve as live-in house parents*** for a home in Archbold/Pettisville, Ohio. This home will provide shelter for people (up to 20) in transition as they work toward stability. This couple will assist with creating a community-based home, managing the day-to-day functions of the home, support the residents with Christ-based compassion along with providing direction and assistance as they take the necessary steps to move toward independence. If interested, please contact Norris or Terry at 419-445-5602 or email terry-triflo@embarqmail.com by Feb. 29.

Associate pastor (full-time or part-time) with a focus on youth ministry is being sought for **Covenant Community Fellowship** in Lansdale, Pa.; www.cc-fellowship.org. Congregation of 170 was a church planting begun in 1986. Forty junior and senior high youth. Contact dennisgehman@comcast.net.

Forest Hills Mennonite Church invites applicants for the position of ***full-time senior pastor***. We are a welcoming, suburban congregation located in Lancaster County, Pa., with an average attendance of 250. A successful candidate will lead the congregation to deepen their personal relationship and commitment to Christ; effectively preach and teach in biblical insight, Anabaptist doctrine and personal application; guide the congregation in fulfilling its mission; have formal pastoral training and experience; lead and work with a staff ministry team and lay leadership; lead and participate in pastoral care of the congregation. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Randy Esch, PO Box 94, Brownstown, PA 17508; email rtesch@ptd.net; 717-656-4045; www.foresthillschurch.org.

Specializing in web development and customized software

Donate online to Mennonite congregations and organizations
https://giving.mennoniteusa.org/
My Account
Complete My Gift
Home | About Us | FAQs | Giving Contacts | Organizations & Projects
Mennonite Church USA
Donate online to Mennonite congregations and organizatio

LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

'Bicycle the San Juans.' Celebrate the beauty of God's creation and benefit MCC! Cycle five days through outstanding scenery and diversity of terrain on the "paradise islets" of the Evergreen State. Aug. 4-8. For registration information, contact Ken Beachy at beachykn@monitorcoop.com or call 503-634-2604.

Conference executive minister sought to serve the churches of **Illinois Mennonite Conference** (IMC) beginning Jan. 1, 2009. Successful candidate will be located in the southern/western Chicago metro area and lead a dispersed staff in pursuing a missional vision in an intercultural, growing conference. Preferred candidate will be a convinced Anabaptist with significant congregational experience and an ability to work with various cultural groups. Requires communication proficiency (oral, written and electronic) in English with Spanish language ability a plus. Additional information available online at www.illinois.mennonite.net or request a packet at feedback@illinois.mennonite.net. Expressions of interest may be addressed to Tim Schrag at 309-963-4065 prior to March 30.

Associate pastor of youth ministry: **Ridgeway Mennonite Church** in Harrisonburg, Va., is accepting applications for .5 FTE position. Congregation of 130; urban setting. Undergraduate degree required; experience in youth ministry preferred. Contact Pastor Ben Risser, 540-434-3476; ridgewaymennonitechurch@yahoo.com.

Lake Center Christian School in Hartville, Ohio, is seeking a ***full-time secondary principal*** (grades 7-12) beginning July 1. Lake Center enrolls 625 students K-12 with an additional administrative team of superintendent, assistant secondary principal and elementary principal. Qualified applicants will value teamwork, provide professional leadership in the areas of teacher supervision/evaluation and curriculum development, establish positive relationships with faculty/staff, students and parents, and have an understanding and acceptance of Mennonite (Anabaptist) faith perspectives. Resumés and inquiries should be directed to: Matt McMullen, superintendent, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632; email lccsmmcmullen@yahoo.com; fax 330-877-2040; phone 330-877-2049, x511.

"Along the Way," a memoir about volunteering with MVS, by Joanne Murray. $12.99 plus shipping. To order 253-page paperback, email www.masthof.com

Goshen College seeks ***special assistant to the president for institutional planning, strategy and research***. Participate in the president's cabinet and work closely with the president in the coordination of a range of activities such as strategic planning, integrated marketing, institutional research, board development and other college-wide initiatives; also oversees the information technology department, special projects and select programs as assigned by the president. Master's required, Ph.D. preferred. Strong skills in organization, planning, problem-solving and analytical ability; knowledge of information systems and of issues in higher education required. To apply, please visit the employment page of www.goshen.edu/employment and follow instructions. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with Mennonite Church USA.

Mennonite Village Retirement Community, with a staff of 350 in Albany, Ore., is seeking an ***HR director*** with a related degree and five years of experience in a faith-based organization. Contact ron@mennonitevillage.org.

Hesston College seeks applicants for the position of ***campus pastor***. Position is full-time nine months a year. Responsibilities include leadership of religious life program, budget management, and training and supervision of student ministry assistants. Qualifications include strong Christian faith, commitment to Mennonite Church USA and to Hesston College. Bachelor's degree in related field required. Master's in divinity with experience preferred. Apply by resumé to Lamar Roth, V.P. of Student Life, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; email LamarR@hesston.edu or call 620-327-8235 for information. Review of applicants begins March 10 and continues until the position is filled. EOE.

Eastern Mennonite University announces a ***full-time, continuing faculty position in English*** beginning Fall 2008. Ph.D. in English, specialist in pre-1800 British literature with preferred secondary specialization in world literature and experience in teaching first-year and upper-level writing. A willingness to teach beyond specialty areas is required to meet needs in a small and vibrant university department. Student advising, university service and ongoing professional scholarship expected. Salary and rank determined by education and experience. Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Marie S. Morris, Vice President and Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, http://www.emu.edu. Review begins immediately. Applicants will be asked to respond to questions specific to EMU's mission after the initial inquiry. EMU reserves the right to fill the position at any time or keep the position open. People who bring diversity are encouraged to apply. EOE

Notice to pastors: Spend quality time with your family and receive spiritual nurture at ***Pastors Family Retreat*** April 11-13 at **Spruce Lake Retreat** (located in peaceful Pocono Mts. of northeastern Pa.). Speaker, Duane Beck. For reservations, call 800-822-7505 or www.sprucelake.org.

Western Mennonite School, Salem, Ore.; position beginning immediately. ***Bookkeeping assistant***. Part-time. This hourly position is responsible for accounts payable, check reconciliation, quarterlies and payroll. Will assist in general ledger, preparing budgets and other assistance as needed. Qualifications include three years bookkeeping with fund accounting experience; prefer a degree in accounting. Application closing date: April 18. Contact Pat Raush at 503-363-2000, 866-343-9378 or praush@westernmennoniteschool.org. Western offers an exceptional, Christ-centered education for grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres within the Willamette Valley of the Pacific Northwest.

The **department of nursing at Goshen College and Goshen Health System** seek applicants or nominations for a ***full-time joint appointment, nursing faculty and clinical nursing research***. Duties include classroom teaching at the undergraduate and graduate level for Goshen College, and clinical nursing research at Goshen Health System. Doctorate in nursing required. The ideal candidate will bring to the job significant experience in nursing research, nursing education and nursing practice. To apply or for more information, visit the position announcement at www.goshen.edu/employment. Goshen College and Goshen Health System are each committed to the development of a diverse work force. Goshen College is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite church. Administrative and teaching faculty members are expected to share this commitment.

Good News Fellowship, located in Ferndale, Wash., is a Mennonite Brethren church of approximately 200 attendees with a heart to reach their community for Christ. We are seeking a qualified ***lead pastor*** to serve as part of an effective elder team that provides leadership in all areas of pastoral and congregational care. Visit our Web site at www.goodnewsfellowship.org prior to emailing your resumé to searchteam@goodnewsfellowship.org and look for the Good News Fellowship Pastoral Candidates link, or you may send your resumé to GNF Search Team, P.O. Box 1733, Ferndale, WA 98248.

Salem Mennonite Church, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alta. (45 minutes southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0; fax 780-662-0106; email cgfen@telus.net.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

Local people serving the insurance needs of Mennonites and Brethren in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

For information about home, auto, farm, church, or business insurance find a Goodville agent near you at goodville.com or 1-800-448-4622.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2008 TOURS

SPRINGTIME CRUISE FROM AMSTERDAM TO PARIS (March 22 -April 2)
EXPERIENCE SOUTH AMERICA (March 28-April 11)
VISIT "TRANSYLVANIA EMERGING" - ROMANIA AND HUNGARY (April 21-May 2) - with MEDA
MOSCOW AND SIBERIA (May 24-June 4)
ISRAEL/PALESTINE WITH AMBS (May 25-June 4)
MENNONITE GREAT TREK ALONG THE SILK ROAD (May 25-June 9)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 4-16)
ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES (June 25-July 7)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 7-20)
EXPLORING SWISS-GERMAN FAMILY ROOTS IN EUROPE (August 25-September 7)
MENNONITE STORY IN POLAND WITH PETER KLASSEN (September 16-24)
CHINA AND A YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)
TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)
FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF MOSES (November 2-14)

2009 TOURS

CHURCHES AND SAFARIS IN KENYA AND TANZANIA (February 9-20)
EXPLORE THE WORLD OF PAUL WITH TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
6 MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE TOURS (July) call or check web site

2010 TOURS

CHECK WEB SITE FOR TOURS INCLUDING OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

TOURMAGINATION
DISCOVERY & FELLOWSHIP

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

A family is a story

Gerald Shenk teaches at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va. His forthcoming book, *Hope Indeed! Remarkable Stories of Peacemakers*, is set to appear in June from Good Books.

Democratic and Republican primaries stirred up a sensation in Virginia last month. I had fun watching the animated speeches of the candidates. They spoke with passion about changes they will bring if elected. Most poignant for me was when Barack Obama talked about hope. In his own words, he clarified that "hope" isn't an ethereal feeling but what real people do to change things, even at great personal cost. And he illustrated this from his own family story, among others.

All of us have families, of one sort or another; we are profoundly formed by our families. How often, I wonder, do we reflect on which stories we tell and why?

We do tell stories. We use them to remind each other of awkward moments, of problems faced and solved, of tests that came unbidden and brought out the best in us.

There was that great snowstorm of 1958, when my dad was lost and found. There was Hurricane Hattie in Belize in 1961, when my dad hit his stride organizing relief and reconstruction. And there were those heifers my grandpa flew over the Andes to help Mennonite farmers in Paraguay after World War II.

Knowing our stories, we can face the unknown.

"Good woman anyhow." That's what a tramp called my grandma one day during the Great Depression. He had come close to the house, inspecting the garden in hopes of a meal. He was wishing to find onions, but my grandma said, Sorry, she didn't have onions. She did provide him a meal, as was her custom. And though disappointed about the onions, he declared her a "good woman anyhow." It became part of family lore. The quiet courtesy of her characteristic humble service stays with us.

I realized after some summer reunions that each family system I participated in was processing stories in a form of risk management. How do we handle illness? What do we tell ourselves about human frailty? Where do the joys lie? How do we respond to setbacks, insecurities and defeats? Is our outlook for the future basically hopeful or gloomy?

We use stories to rehearse our working values, to capture moments when extraordinary meaning shines through the routine realities of our lives.

We may be the family that experienced great loss, but we celebrate the toughness that comes with survival.

We may be the family that often runs short on time or money, but we celebrate the track record of generosity and care for others.

We may be the family where disease struck suddenly, out of the blue, and we grieve it together and continue to struggle with how to make sense of suffering in the providence of God.

In each case, you have to know this story to understand how this family works. And you have to keep reciting the story to keep it working.

Storytelling creates a world of resilience. Knowing our stories, we can face the unknown. Reciting our stories, we sustain the world and populate it with wisdom from those who no longer reside among us. Recounting perils of the past, we summon up new resolve to handle the challenges of the present. We also sketch some shape for the future.

Mary Douglas, an anthropologist I studied with at Northwestern University, spoke of groups and cultures as organized around concepts of risk and danger. When you select your danger, you are choosing the shape of your culture's response. Different patterns unfold from stories of fear rather than stories of hope and courage.

Our political order, our financial realm and even our entertainment world are all defined by stories. Corporations, political parties and marketing schemes push competing stories onto our field of vision. As people of God, we must have stronger stories of our own.

God stories draw their strength from the power of love, forgiveness, suffering accepted and endured with honor, and joy in worthy causes. If we tune to ancient wisdom about families named from God, we will cherish our identities and the story markers that remind us who we are while welcoming others into the Great Story as well. We will honor their stories, too, since as children of God we all bear the imprint of an original family, whose creator is God.

"A wandering Aramean was my ancestor" (Deuteronomy 26:5). We recite this as part of our offering in worship, acknowledging that God brought us to this place, and the life we have here is a gift from God. We rehearse this story to place our present in its proper framework. Gratitude is sketched into the narrative, modeled and trained as response that shapes character. And hope, as always among God's people, is born and born again in the real stories of our families. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

In a New Light: Spirituality and the Media Arts by Ron Austin (Eerdmans, 2007, $12) unpacks the spiritual principles underlying the art of film, including a historical survey of how cinematic art was shaped by the crisis of modernity.

Praying With Beads: Daily Prayers for the Christian Year by Nan Lewis Doerr and Virginia Stem Owens (Eerdmans, 2007, $12) shows how the simple physical practice of using beads can deepen and transform our prayer lives into a richer spiritual experience.

Thanking and Blessing—The Sacred Art: Spiritual Vitality Through Gratefulness by Jay Marshall (SkyLight Paths, 2007, $16.99) shows how to capture the goodness, holiness and abundance that saturate our world.

The Purple Crown: The Politics of Martyrdom by Tripp York (Herald Press, 2007, $18.99) shows how Christianity's ultimate act of witnessing, martyrdom, is an inherently political act. York argues that the path of Christianity leads to a confrontation with the same powers that crucified Jesus.

Borders and Bridges: Mennonite Witness in a Religiously Diverse World, edited by Peter Dula and Alain Epp Weaver (Cascadia Publishing House and Herald Press, 2007, $19.95), offers case studies of ways Mennonites have contributed to peacebuilding in multireligious contexts—and a theological rationale for interfaith collaboration.

The Way the World Is: The Christian Perspective of a Scientist by John Polkinghorne (Westminster John Knox Press, 2007, $16.95) draws from Polkinghorne's experiences as a scientist and a theologian to argue that Christianity presents a credible and compelling worldview that must be taken seriously even while fully recognizing the importance of science.

Prayer by Joyce Rupp (Orbis Books, 2007, $10) and **Reconciliation** by Robert Morneau (Orbis Books, 2007, $10) are the first two titles in Orbis' new series "Catholic Spirituality for Adults," in which leading Catholic authors explore the deepest dimensions of spirituality.

Running—The Sacred Art: Preparing to Practice by Warren A. Kay (SkyLight Paths, 2007, $16.99) combines penetrating reflections on God, creation and the role of the Spirit in our lives with practical, concise running tips for turning an ordinary run into an extraordinary opportunity for spiritual growth.

Monk Habits for Everyday People: Benedictine Spirituality for Protestants by Dennis Okholm (Brazos Press, 2007, $12.99) unpacks the Rule of St. Benedict—a practical guide for living the Christian faith and cultivating Christian virtue—by reflecting on such aspects of spirituality as listening, poverty, obedience, humility, hospitality, stability and balance.

Carlo Carretto: Essential Writings, selected by Robert Ellsberg (Orbis Books, 2007, $16), is part of the Modern Spiritual Masters Series. Carretto, a member of the Little Brothers of Jesus, the order inspired by Charles de Foucauld, presented an ascetic yet joy-filled spirituality that called to mind the spirit of his favorite saint, Francis of Assisi.

Solidarity Will Transform the World: Stories of Hope from Catholic Relief Services by Jeffry Odell Korgen (Orbis Books, 2007, $16) tells the story of what can happen when the resources of the Catholic Church come together with the resources—both spiritual and physical—of people living in poverty around the world.

TMail
TMail
An e-zine of The Mennonite magazine

Mennonite Mondays:

Start every week with updates on the latest Mennonite happenings. Sign up for *TMail*—the free, weekly ezine with Web-exclusive stories and blog updates as well as breaking news.

To sign up, visit
www.themennonite.org

Or send your request to
TMail@themennonite.org
providing your email address.

***************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 877 15-DEC-09 66994 35 31
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Two rights make a wrong

The Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference bishop board considered on Feb. 15 additional disciplinary action against bishop Linford King after he ordained Janet Breneman in the district he oversees (see page 6). King was reprimanded by the board in August 2007 for his ordination of Elizabeth Nissley in June 2007.

Assistant editor Anna Groff was baptized in the East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in 1997. Editor Everett Thomas was baptized in the Vine Street (now James Street) Mennonite Church in 1963. Both congregations are in the Lancaster city district where King serves as bishop.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

The ministers in the Lancaster (Pa.) city district are right to encourage their bishop, Linford King, to ordain women pastors in their congregations. This is because Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC) decided to join Mennonite Church USA. Furthermore, a flawed decision-making process regarding ordination of women does not trump denominational membership expectations.

Those in LMC who want to ordain women should be able to follow the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, which guides Mennonite Church USA and calls both men and women to leadership positions: "The church … appoints gifted men and women to a variety of leadership ministries on its behalf."

Although a bishop board recommendation for women to be ordained did not receive the required two-thirds vote of credentialed leaders in January 2007, the conference should address the ways that process was flawed and, therefore, has led some congregations to ordain women:

1. Lay people—many are asking for the ordinations of these women—had no voice in the vote.
2. Leaders who did not participate in the sessions addressing the bishop board's recommendation to ordain women were permitted to vote.
3. The wording of the bishop board recommendation—stating that women could be ordained but not become bishops—could have been problematic for some voters and skewed the results.

LMC should make a timely commitment to revisit its January 2007 decision with conversation and discernment rather than disciplining a bishop who follows our confession of faith.

These ordinations also demonstrate the commitment of individuals and congregations to LMC. As Elizabeth Nissley (see side note) said, "I prefer to not follow our history of divisiveness over this matter and instead learn to live with differences."

Remaining in a trying situation with determination to follow God's call—without breaking away—requires such strength and loyalty.—*ag*

The Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference bishop board was right to initiate disciplinary proceedings against Linford King, bishop for the Lancaster city district. This is because ordination is a ministerial vestment that may be authorized only by an area conference, according to one of Mennonite Church USA's formation documents.

Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC) must begin ordaining women as soon as possible. To be part of Mennonite Church USA means that ordination is open to women as well as men. *A Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership* (Faith & Life Press, 1996) is unequivocal in this regard.

"Women and men may be granted credentials to Christian ministry," says the document in the introduction to the ordination section. This is the basis for those who have moved forward with ordination of women in Lancaster Conference.

But the next two sentences in the document reveal why the action of one bishop—at the urging of some ministers and congregations within his district—may also be considered wrong.

"These credentials are granted only by an area conference … and the credentialed person is accountable to the area conference for the ministry credential."

The issue here is ordination. This great treasure of the church may be vested in a minister only by an area conference, according to Mennonite Church USA. To allow a single bishop—working at the behest of a subgroup within a conference—to claim this treasure creates a conundrum.

"If we change the rules for you," a wise mother once told her child, "then we must change the rules for everyone."

There is a way forward in this difficult situation. LMC established a credentials committee several months ago. To this group should be assigned the responsibility to determine ministerial credentials; such a group must be authorized and freed to offer ordination to all whom God has called to ministry and whom the church confirms.—*ejt*

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

March 18, 2008

MAR 26 2008
AMBS
Library

Agnus Dei

Lamb of God

Page 8

12 It isn't over until ...

14 606

18 Being self-aware while riding waves of change

32 Radical meals

Bringing forth God's peace

Kenneth Thompson is pastor of Friendship Community Church, Bronx, N.Y.

There is one essential need all people have in common in the cities and suburbs, the inner cities and the rural towns, on the reservations and the retreat centers, the refugee village and retirement villages: the need for God's peace. Epidemics, natural disasters, financial concerns and family matters, church relations, job situations, government legislation, war escalation—all this and worse from sin's curse, people need God's peace now more than ever. But how do we bring forth the peace we profess to the stressed and storm-tossed soul who "sees the lightning flash, hears the thunder roll, feels dark waters dashing, trying to conquer their poor soul"? Simple. Bring the peace you live to where they live.

The peace we live is more than a statement against violence, aggression and prejudice. It is first a living peace arising from a genuine faith experience with the Risen Savior, Jesus Christ. Next it is personally embracing God's precepts and principles to govern our life, faith and daily living. As a missional people, our message is unique because it understands God's peace to be the experience of true heart-peace, blessed quietness, freedom from all fears, agitating passions and moral conflicts, having every good and necessary supply for life and community through Jesus Christ.

Sometimes our churches wrestle against the force of the refusal to believe in and yield to God's peace. Behind all the problems in the world is a structure of reinforced beliefs that refuse God's grace and truth and reject God's counsel of peace. Current history is witness to the fact that the terrors of militarism, prejudice and economic injustice that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke against did not pass with the 1960s. They merely paused, modified their appearance and tactics, and began again. They are energized because people are enticed by and engaged in seeking profit, comfort, control and expediency. There has to be a movement that reaches people at their hearts and minds if we hope to make a difference.

People need to hear, see and believe the peace we profess is a genuine choice in response to the call to participate in, among and with the family of God. Just as Jesus presents God to us, we have an ambassadorial role to present Jesus to people where they live. If peace is only in the temple and not the marketplace, or reaches the mountaintops but not the valleys; if it sounds more like an institutional philosophy or an ideological curiosity than an experiential truth; if it is relegated to isolated, ethereal encounters full of sentiment but devoid of power to transform—we have failed to bring the message, we diminish the power of the Word, and we enable people to dismiss its relevance.

We bring the peace we live to where people live by faithfully communicating a mindset that is committed to living according to the precepts, principles, moral sensibilities and ethics of God's kingdom as Jesus taught. As we believe and practice God's word of faith, worship and well-being, we disarm the ungodly prejudices that measure a person's value by their possessions, position, skin color, gender and ethnicity. As we resist civilization's insistence on self-sustained and self-indulgent prosperity and gross consumption, we believe and proclaim deliverance, safety, healing, provision and soundness for a prosperous life through salvation in Jesus Christ.

By believing in Jesus Christ and his Word, we enter God's peace to guide our faithful, patient lives and work. From that place of peace we can confidently, by God's Spirit, creatively bring forth the peace of God we live in to share with our neighbors across the street and around the world. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 6, March 18, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

11

7

20

12

8 Agnus Dei: Lamb of God
Easter is about God worshiping us.—*Everett J. Thomas*

12 It isn't over until ...
The tears of Good Friday lead to the gladness of Easter morning.—*Kenneth L. Gibble*

14 606
When, why and how do Mennonites use the anthem?—*Anna Groff*

16 Personal mission
Mennonite higher education—part 6—*J. Daniel Hess*

19 Mennonites and Lutherans keep talking
Two issues remain unresolved: baptism and relation of the church and state.—*Everett J. Thomas*

20 Year later, Bluffton remembers tragedy

21 Health insurance proposal to be tested

22 Wedding spans eras and continents

23 King examines 'sports obsessed' culture

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Bringing forth God's peace—*Kenneth Thompson*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Leadership
Being self-aware while riding waves of change—*Iris de León Hartshorn*

24 For the record

30 Mediaculture
Road trips, torture scenes expose war's truths—*Anna Groff*

32 Editorial
Radical meals—*Gordon Houser*

Cover: Dreamstime.com

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The body of Christ is sadly broken

As a Mennonite who has developed certain Catholic sympathies in recent years, I found Chad Mason's article "Mennonite but Not Anabaptist" (Jan. 8) a compelling argument for recognition of all baptism. However, recent letters that have appeared in response reveal a tragic division.

There is more common ground between Mennonites and Catholics than many in either tradition realize, including the central role of the faith community into which one enters at baptism. The key difference is whether baptism is seen as a sacramental cleansing or a public declaration of faith. Yet even these views ought to be complementary rather than divisive. Like Communion, the meaning of baptism is diluted when we insist on the mere symbolism of the act.

It is true that the earliest Christians baptized only new believers because there were not yet "Christian homes" into which they could be born (although the "households" mentioned in Acts may well have included young children). Whether this is prescriptive for Christians at all times is open to debate. I am still inclined to see believer's baptism as preferable. But I am hard pressed to find any biblical basis for rebaptism.

If I were to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church, there would be no need to be rebaptized, since my baptism in the Mennonite church was a valid trinitarian baptism and is recognized as such by the Catholic Church—which affirms one baptism.

I once asked a respected Catholic pedagogue, "If we can recognize one baptism, why can't we recognize one Communion?"

I am now saddened to realize that there is not even one sacrament that is universally recognized by all Christians. As long as this is the case, the body of Christ remains sadly broken.—*Julia Smucker, Orodara, Burkina Faso*

Editor's note: In our Feb. 19 issue we announced that no more letters would be published in response to Mason's article. We decided to publish Smucker's letter, however, because of the lag time required for mail to her village in Burkina Faso.

Apologies for misrepresentation

It has been for me a privilege to interview a large number of alumni for the series on Mennonite higher education (see page 16). With the interviews went a promise to show copy prior to publication, to make sure the stories and quotations are correct. Alas, by oversight I did not clear copy with Steve Thomas (Feb. 19). My apologies, Steve. He was a fine student of mine at Goshen (Ind.) College, then went on to study at and graduate from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. He is now a pastor.

I did not wish to imply that Steve was a consumer of alcohol at Hesston (Kan.) College. Neither was he a jerk. "Ready to live it up?"—yes. He was a fun-loving prankster during his first year. A religious experience led to a second year in which he greatly appreciated the guidance of a prof and the support of a small group.—*J.Daniel Hess, Indianapolis*

Hold conventions in central location

As a Westerner, I was extremely disappointed to see the Executive Board's reasoning for holding the 2011 convention in Pittsburgh rather than Phoenix. It would appear that in Mennonite Church USA, if you do not live near the major Mennonite centers, then you are not worth coming to.

Gordon Houser's Feb. 19 report of the Executive Board meeting said, "Phoenix, Ariz., was the best option. However, given the low attendance at San José 2007, the likelihood of a larger attendance, given proximity to the largest number of constituents, made Pittsburgh the best value."

We here in the West were greatly appreciative of the 2007 convention being held in San José and

IN THIS ISSUE

We learned early that our readers expect the issue closest to Holy Week to focus on Easter. But it has been difficult to do so because we receive few article proposals about Easter. So last fall I began praying and ruminating about an idea for the cover story in this issue: that Good Friday is when God worships us (see page 8). The tradition that Jesus is the Lamb of God emerged as the way to write about such an act of worship. But I was wavering about whether to write such an article until one night during church choir practice when our director had us sing a composition he wrote called "Agnus Dei" (see page 10). Singing Lee Dengler's work for the first time was confirmation that I should write about the Lamb of God, "Agnus Dei" in Latin, with its roots in the Genesis 22 story of Isaac's near sacrifice. Because we so often rush through Good Friday to get quickly to the breaking joy of Easter morning, a companion article by freelancer Kenneth Gibble imagines the thoughts of Pontius Pilate, Mary the mother of Jesus and the disciples (page 12). For many Mennonites who linger a bit longer on the meaning of Good Friday, singing "606"—some call it the "Mennonite anthem"—on Easter Sunday morning will imbue its words with renewed sacredness (page 14). Finally, in this issue we publish the last article in a six-part series on Mennonite higher education provided by Mennonite Education Agency.—*Everett Thomas* encouraged as many in our congregation who could to attend. We had a high representation. As a delegate, I was seated at a table that had a majority of Westerners (Idaho, Oregon, Washington, California and Texas were represented). There were a few from Pennsylvania and Ohio also.

Having lived in the greater Philadelphia area and participated in Franconia Mennonite Conference congregations, I am familiar with the fact that there are cultural differences between those who live in different parts of the country. When we said it was difficult to have Mennonite theologians come to our part of the world, it was so interesting to hear one of the Eastern participants warning us [Westerners] about using theologians from "theologically liberal institutions," such as Berkeley, for our theological formation. I felt angry about that assumption, because I am not aware of anyone from that institution instructing our congregations here in the West. What was wonderful, however, was the representation at our table of Westerners, giving us the opportunity to speak of the challenges we face in ministry here.

For me, choosing Pittsburgh over Phoenix denies the members of Mennonite Church USA in the West the opportunity to participate in conventions. We then are forced continually to pay the high price of travel to conventions. It saddens me that we had a low turnout at San José 2007 and that this is the reason given to not meet in the West.

I propose that conventions be held more centrally—even Ohio is a long, expensive trip for those of us from the West. Another possibility is to alternate which coast or region conventions are held. A rotation schedule would mean that all must take turns traveling to conventions and give non-Mennonites the opportunity to find out who we are. This may lead to new congregations springing up in places where there is not a strong Mennonite presence. Wouldn't that be wonderful?—*Karla C. Morton, Meridian, Idaho*

Overseas workers' fund

The Mennonite maintains a special fund into which interested readers can contribute money to pay for subscriptions sent by airmail to 10 (currently) overseas mission workers. This fund is now depleted. If you are interested in helping replenish this fund, please send your contribution to:

The Mennonite,
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526.

Designate: Overseas Workers Fund

Do not try to quench the Spirit

I respectfully submit that the focus of your two thoughtful editorials on women's ordination (March 4) is wrong. The main issue is not church structure or whether a shepherd should be disciplined for supporting his flock, going against the rules of a church structure. The issue is how to respond when women feel God calling them to serve and whether the church can try to quench the Holy Spirit without harming itself.

Of course, none of us can quench the Spirit; if we refuse to allow God's gifts to be used, they will be given and received elsewhere. This is fundamentally a spiritual issue, and we are wrong to deal with it mainly as a church structure issue. God gives good gifts; we are wise to accept them.—*Ardell Stauffer, Akron, Pa.*

Congratulations on 10th anniversary

Regarding "*The Mennonite* is Now 10 Years Old" (Feb. 19): 10 fruitful years and counting. Congratulations. Broadly representative of the church in many lands, *The Mennonite* even introduced the "e-zine," that will help reach across age barriers and bring youth into God's mission for the church. Thank you for your faithfulness and your steady vision.—*J.B. Shenk, Goshen, Ind.*

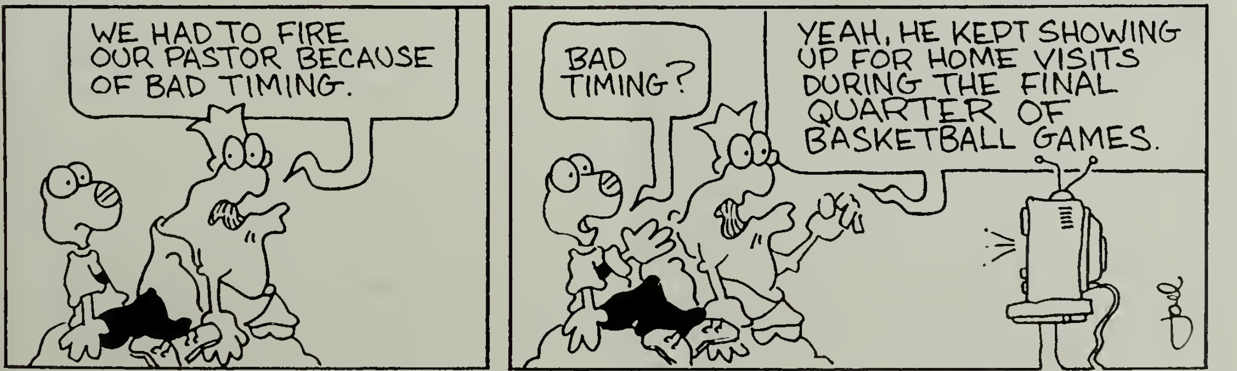
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

How often does your congregation sing "606"? (71 votes)

○ Sometimes (46%)
○ Rarely (27%)
○ Often (15%)
○ What is 606? (11%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


WE HAD TO FIRE OUR PASTOR BECAUSE OF BAD TIMING.
BAD TIMING?
YEAH, HE KEPT SHOWING UP FOR HOME VISITS DURING THE FINAL QUARTER OF BASKETBALL GAMES.

IN BRIEF

Campolo describes Jesus' agenda

Eastern University professor emeritus Tony Campolo spoke to Bluffton (Ohio) University students, faculty and staff Feb. 19 about Jesus' political agenda and the kingdom of God. Campolo spoke about God's kingdom and how it is not a far-off destination but a reality for those who seek it. Campolo explained that in the kingdom of God, children do not die in infancy or are born into calamity, and older people live out their lives in health and well-being. He said religion should not be about "doing good" in this life just to be blessed in the next but about fulfilling Jesus' agenda to bring the kingdom of God to earth. A Bible that has so many verses about helping the poor and that calls us all to be kingdom builders has a political agenda. "You can waste your life in observitude, collecting stuff, or you can commit yourself to live sacrificially, work for change and try to see the agenda Jesus is actualizing in history," said Campolo. "We can become people who care." —*Bluffton University*

Missing in Iraq

Estimated number of families internally displaced in Iraq since February 2006: 106,000 (two-thirds of them thought to be women and children).—*Sojourners*

Two Mennonite pastors arrested in witness

WASHINGTON—Two Mennonite pastors were arrested March 7 in the Hart Senate office building with 36 others when they refused to follow orders to end their impromptu worship service following the Christian Peace Witness for Iraq here.

Those arrested included Mennonite pastors André Gingerich Stoner (Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.) and Karl Shelly (Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.).

Pouring rain failed to dampen the spirits of those participating in the second annual interfaith witness organized by Christian Peace Witness for Iraq. Green armbands distributed to Mennonites before the weekend witness began were visible throughout the small crowd.

"Let's call them showers of blessing," James Forbes, pastor emeritus of Riverside Church in New York, told the crowd. One of more than a dozen speakers, including Jewish and Muslim leaders, Forbes said that God cares for all people—Americans and Iraqis alike. He said Christians opposed to the war in Iraq should use the national political campaign this year to raise issues about peace.—*Mennonite Church USA*

MEA report goes to wider audience

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mennonite Education Agency of Mennonite Church USA for the first time has combined the annual reports of educational institutions and programs, extensive educational statistics placed in tables and graphs, and true-to-life stories about Mennonite education into one resource, the Mennonite Education Annual Report Fall 2007. The report, which provides the latest and most complete picture of what has happened and is happening in Mennonite education, is on MEA's Web site, www.MennoniteEducation.org.

MEA developed the Mennonite Education Annual Report Fall 2007 and shared it with a broad audience to help those in Mennonite Church USA become more aware of how Mennonite education is transforming lives, training future leaders and encouraging their students to make a difference in the world. MEA believes the value of Mennonite education should be revealed because of the important role these institutions and programs play in providing a foundation for the church of today and the future.

The Mennonite Education Annual Report Fall 2007 has been divided into sections, each focusing on one of three types of information. Narrative reports, written annually by Mennonite institutions and programs, focus on how they bring about transformational leadership in their community and its impact. The annual enrollment report gives data and trends from the preschool and kindergarten classes of the PreK-12 schools through the graduate and seminary programs of higher education. The story section includes the six J. Daniel Hess articles on Mennonite education that are appearing in *The Mennonite* and several "snapshots" from the Education Opportunities Summit in November 2007 from Racial/Ethnic Mennonite schools and organizations.—*MEA*

Vada Snider/Bethel College

Bethel College nursing students light lamps

Among the 46 members of the Bethel College nursing class of 2009 are, front row, from left, Cane Griffiths, Clay Center, Kan.; Munna Godfrey, Wichita, Kan.; Lacey Fyler, McPherson, Kan.; middle: Justin Novinger, Wichita, Jane Njagi, Wichita, Punya Neupane, Wichita; back: Amanda Watts, Wichita; Esther Waitherero, Wichita; Jacy Suttlemyre, Newton, Kan. The traditional lamplighting for juniors was held Feb. 10 on the North Newton, Kan., campus.—*Bethel College*

EMS grads pursue chaplaincy roles

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Many people prefer to avoid hospitals and nursing homes, but many Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS) graduates have chosen these places to do ministry.

About a dozen recent EMS graduates are pursuing chaplaincy roles as their ministry field, partially due to the Clinical Pastoral Education program at EMS. CPE gives students opportunity to explore ministry in a hospital or retirement community. Because of this, many choose to continue their ministry as chaplains after seminary.

"CPE at EMS helped me find a home in ministry," says 2005 seminary graduate Todd Warren, a hospice chaplain with Mount Carmel Health Systems in Columbus, Ohio. "I was struggling to find where I could join in God's work in the world and where my gifts could be used most effectively and faithfully. My CPE experience was instrumental in my becoming a chaplain."

Mary Jo Bowman, a 2007 EMS graduate and currently a chaplain resident at University Health System in Charlottesville, Va., says, "CPE at EMS was a major factor in my deciding to be a chap-

Melissa Engle

urch offers school for Iraqi Christian refugees

ıda Nader (red coat) and Marian Abrow play together during ecess at a Chaldean Catholic church in Amman, Jordan. ennonite Central Committee supports the church with ants for its informal school. Many of the children are Iraqi ristians from families that have fled Iraq due to war.—*MCC*

lain." Bowman was a nurse and massage therapist before attending seminary and enjoys using her professional health background in ministry.

Jill Gerig, a 2007 EMS grad, is a chaplain resident at the University of Colorado hospital in Aurora, Colo. "Chaplaincy work really puts life in perspective," she says.

"It's an honor to be with hospital patients and their families in helping them deal with difficult situations," she adds. "I enjoy the challenge of offering support to total strangers in a time of crisis. I'm continually blessed by the courage and faith I see in so many patients."—*EMS*

Missionary couple moves to Kenya

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Aram DiGennaro says: "We are going to Kenya because God told us to go. We feel what we have to offer will be useful in Kenya."

Despite the fact that Kenya is not a popular place to visit or live right now, Aram DiGennaro, Debbi, his wife, and their two young children plan to move from Columbus to Nairobi, Kenya, this month to serve with Eastern Mennonite Missions.

"I've been following the situation in Kenya closely," Aram says. "No Kenyan I've talked to is impartial. There is a lot of disarray in the country. A lot of healing is needed. The church is in a position to do what churches are supposed to do. I hope they haven't lost the sense of hope and expectation that they had prior to the current crisis."—*EMM*

Goshen track athlete defends national title

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn.—Continuing the recent surge of championships by the Goshen (Ind.) College women's track and field team, sophomore Tina Peters defended her 2007 title with another win March 6-8 at the NAIA Indoor National Championships in Johnson City.

Peters, the 2007 indoor and outdoor national champion in the 3,000-meter racewalk, again "ran" away from the competition with a time of 15:22.42. While the time was 10 seconds over her top-seeded qualifying time of 15:12.09, Peters still cruised by the field, finishing nearly a minute and a half in front of second place (16:43.49).

Peters, from Yellow Springs, Ohio, becomes the holder of three of the seven national championships in the history of Goshen College athletics. Peters becomes the first Maple Leaf to hold three national titles.

Deanna Kronk, a junior from Elkhart, Ind., shattered her own school record with a throw of 52'6 3/4" in the weight throw. Kronk finished in fifth place, earning her first All- American honors (the top six finishers receive All-American recognition).

Kronk also participated in the shot put but fouled on all three attempts.

Also competing in Tennessee was junior Abri Houser, from Newton, Kan., in her third trip to indoor nationals, in the 60-meter hurdles. She finished 13th, one spot out of the semifinals.

Goshen finished in 16th, their third straight year in the top 20 in the nation.—*Goshen College*

Shopping fund-raisers fight domestic violence

AKRON, Pa.—Every year on March 8, millions gather in rallies and parades around the world to honor the achievements of women on International Women's Day. Ten Thousand Villages joined forces with the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence to celebrate the event in March.

Ten Thousand Villages hosts community shopping fund-raisers throughout its network of 81 nationwide stores and on its Web site, tenthousandvillages.com. When customers shop one of the stores on a night scheduled to benefit their local domestic violence prevention agency or shelter, 10 percent of all sales are donated to the organization. —*Ten Thousand Villages*

—compiled by Gordon Houser

IN BRIEF

Education pioneer Milton Good dies

Milton R. Good, founding chair of Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont., died March 3. Born in 1911 in Waterloo Township, Good was a driving force behind the inter-Mennonite initiative that led to the establishment of Conrad Grebel College on the campus of the University of Waterloo in 1963. He served for 21 years on the Board of Governors of the college (1961-82), the first eight of those as founding chair.

Good was also involved with the founding of Fairview Mennonite Home, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Mennonite Mutual Aid, Eastwood Mennonite Community Homes Inc. and the Mennonite Publishing Service. —*Conrad Grebel University*

Money comes, goes

- Projected embezzlement from churches and Christian institutions in 2008: $25 billion;
- Projected giving to global foreign missions in 2008: $23 billion.—*Christianity Today*

Agnus Dei

by Everett J. Thomas

The Easter story—Christ's death and resurrection—is not about man's inhumanity to man. It is an act of worship; it is about God worshiping us.

The word worship means, literally, "worth-ship." That means that when we worship God, we are declaring how much God is worth to us. But Easter demonstrates how much we are worth to God: We are worth so much that he gave us his only Son.

The first listeners who heard, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," would have understood implicitly something we do not, that to give one's only son was to give everything one possessed. Those first listeners would also have connected this statement to a story in Genesis 22: Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his only begotten son. Being willing to do so was a sign of how much Jahweh was worth to Abraham.

The text specifies that this sacrifice of Isaac was an act of worship. Abraham said to the servants who were traveling with him, "Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship" (Genesis 22:5).

Sacrificing Isaac was Abraham's single act of worship in this story.

Easter demonstrates how much we are worth to God: We are worth so much that he gave us his only Son.

Lamb of God

Easter is about God worshiping us.

Abraham had been childless for years in a culture that valued sons above all else. In this cashless society, progeny was wealth. One might appear prosperous, with many camels, servants and tents. But sons defined a man. Abraham, without a son, would die and leave no posterity. To the Ancient Near Eastern mind, that meant Abraham would disappear. When Sarah finally became pregnant and gave birth, Abraham's total existence and essence was carried in one fragile vessel: the body of a small boy named Isaac.

But Jahweh asked Abraham to sacrifice this only son. It was a request for Abraham to sacrifice himself—his identity, his essence, his own life coursing through the boy's veins.

In Genesis 22:2, Jahweh tells Abraham, "Take you son, your only son Isaac, whom you love … and offer him there as a burnt offering." This request was really a test. Jahweh was asking Isaac, "How much am I worth to you?" Abraham's answer was a statement: You are worth my very existence, my essence, my life.

The Lamb of God

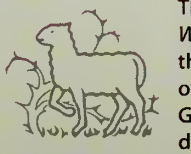
The chain reference in the NRSV immediately connects Genesis 22:2 to John 3:16. To paraphrase John 3:16, "Abraham so loved (worshiped) God that he was willing to give his only begotten son."

As a father offering his son, God demonstrated his love by incarnating himself as a sacrifice—the ultimate act of worship.

In the end, Abraham did not. In the end, Jahweh did.

During a unique moment in history thousands of years after Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac, God declared how much he loves humanity by participating in the most primordial of human experiences: He appeared in a specific place and at a specific time as a parent with a child. No other medium for engaging human life could have been as compelling and as complete. Jesus often reminded his followers of this by calling himself the Son of Man.

As a father offering his son, God demonstrated his love by incarnating himself as a sacrifice—the ultimate act of worship. God gave his essence to us in Jesus Christ. This is how much we are worth to God.



The logo on the cover of *Hymnal: A Worship Book* appears to represent the ram stuck in the briar in the story of Isaac's near sacrifice. Historian Jan Gleysteen alerted the hymnal's designer to this image from Dutch Mennonite history. Gleysteen agrees that it is a reference to the Genesis 22 story but said there is no way to verify the connection. The hymnal's title page says of the image: "The lamb in the midst of the briar is a traditional Anabaptist symbol. It illustrates the suffering Lamb of God, who calls the faithful to obedient service. Since in the past it has been used to represent unity among believers, it is an appropriate symbol of this cooperatively produced hymnal."—*ejt*

Unlike the story in Genesis 22, however, when the time came for God's act of worship, there was no substitute. God followed through with the very act of worship he did not require of Abraham. Jesus became the "lamb" sacrificed as an act of worship. That is why we called Jesus the Lamb of God—"Agnus Dei."

Many Mennonite congregations are reminded of this act of worship by the logo on the front of *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. It is fitting that in our tradition—we worship most deeply by singing—the sacrificial lamb adorns our hymnal (see box above).

But this connection between Abraham's willingness to worship Jahweh with his all and God's willingness to sacrifice his all for us has even richer meanings. The near-sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22 started a worship tradition that sweeps through

Continued on page 10

Jesus dying on the cross was God's way of loving us with all his heart, soul, mind and strength.

Continued from page 9

Agnus Dei: Composer Lee Dengler's 2006 composition "Agnus Dei" is available at www.themennonite.org as streaming audio. The first pages of the score are also available as a pdf. Dengler is a member of the ministerial team at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., and teaches in the music department at Goshen College. The composition was commissioned for the Concert Choir of Souderton (Pa.) Area High School.

the entire biblical story. Its meaning passes through Egypt and culminates at the Last Supper.

The Paschal Lamb

Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac inspired a tradition among his descendants. They, too, showed how much Jahweh was worth to them by sacrificing animals. This worship tradition settled on sacrificing young and unblemished lambs. The sacrificial lamb represented the offer of a son—one's life essence given to Jahweh in worship.

In the book of Exodus, the descendants of Abraham—eventually known as the children of Israel—no longer were nomadic sheep herders in the wilderness but lived in cities in Egypt. In Exodus 12 they continued the worship tradition.

When the time came for Jahweh to free them from captivity, Jahweh asked them once again to declare themselves through an act of worship. As the angel of death visited each house in Egypt, the blood of a lamb sprinkled on the door indicated that the members of that household worshiped Jahweh. The angel of death passed over.

So profound was this moment in Israel's history that the lamb used for this declaration became known as the Paschal Lamb (the Passover Lamb).

The Lamb of God

At the Last Supper, Jesus observed Passover with his disciples and completed the worship circle begun by Jahweh in Genesis 22. At this Passover, Jesus identified himself as the animal in the briar—the Paschal Lamb—and asked his disciples to eat of his flesh and drink of his blood. To do so was to accept, viscerally, God's declaration of their worth to him.

Today, when we eat of the bread and drink of the cup, we are confessing to God, "We receive your love for us." We may also say with fear and trembling, "We are mortified—even scandalized—that eating these elements is an acknowledgement of how much we are worth to you."

So how do we respond to this God who worships us and all humanity? Jesus' words at the Last Supper tell us.

"Love one another as I have loved you," Jesus said (John 15:12).

Maundy Thursday

During the week before Easter, many Christians gather on Thursday evening to commemorate the Last Supper. During this commemoration we are reminded of this commandment to love each other. It is called Maundy Thursday because "maundy" means "commandment." The Church of the Brethren—with whom we share *Hymnal: A Worship Book*—hold this as a particularly important moment in the church year. They call it the Love Feast. In a sense, we are to worship each other. Commemorating the Last Supper, we declare how much other Christian sisters and brothers are worth to us.

These truths are embodied in another commandment Jesus gave us in Mark 12: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength [and] … you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Jesus dying on the cross was God's way of loving us with all his heart, soul, mind and strength. This is the way God worshiped all humanity—those who lived before us, all who are alive now and those who are not yet born.

It is little wonder, then, that a prayer introduced by Sergius I (687-701) has become a universal response to this beautiful and awful truth:

"O Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

"O Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

"O Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

"Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Miserere nobis

"Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Miserere nobis

"Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem."

Everett J. Thomas is editor of The Mennonite.

Genesis 22 and crucifixion-resurrection

"The connections some interpreters have drawn between the danger and drama of the near sacrifice of Isaac and the crucifixion-resurrection of Jesus has led at times to a blending of these two stories into one. This merging began early in the church's interpretation of Genesis 22. Irenaeus and Tertullian related the wood which Isaac carried to the cross Jesus bore. Apparently the merging of the near sacrifice of Isaac with the Passion narrative of Jesus was reflected rather generally in the worship of the early church." *(Believers Church Bible Commentary*, Eugene F. Ropp, Herald Press)

Easter

by Julie Cadwallader-Staub

All winter: crows and chickadees.
Now, standing in this snowy field,
I bow my head to untangle the joyful calls:
goldfinches, kingbirds, robins, cedar waxwings.

And I can hear the snow melting, too:
the caves, pillars, ridges, layers,
these many-storied crystalline structures
known only to winter
collapsing under their own weight.

In spring, even grief struggles
to maintain its icy mansion.
Faith breathes upon its very foundation
and when the ice gives way, room by roof by porte cochére:
well, look, it was made of water too:

the same water that birthed us
the same water that sustains us
the same water that this goldfinch
is splashing in right now,
its plumage turning from olive to gold.

Julie Cadwallader-Staub lives in South Burlington, Vt.

After sunrise

by Dana Ryan

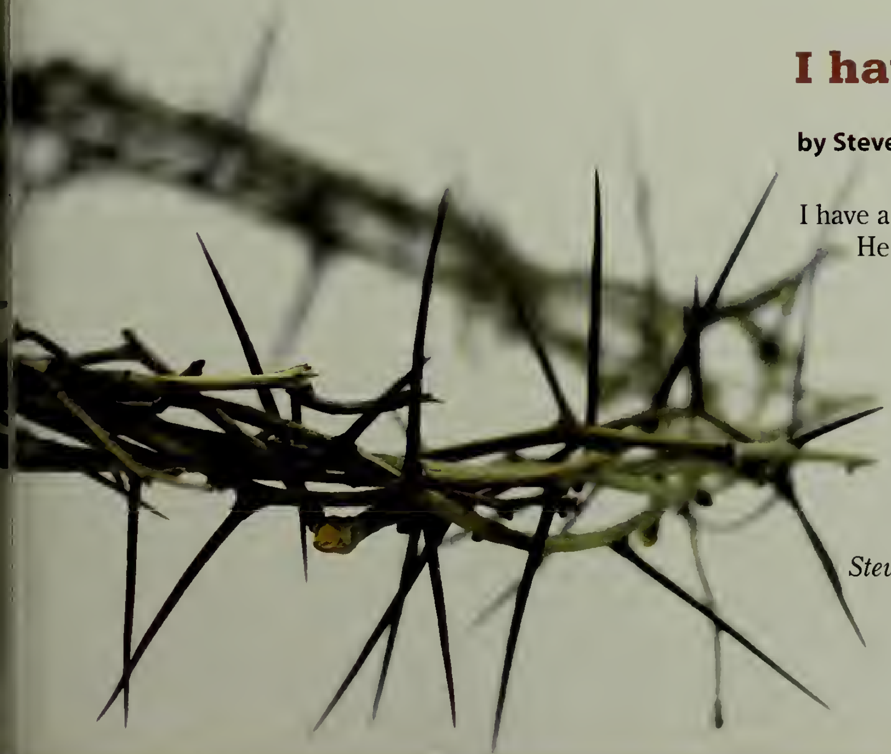
Peter was hurt it says
an amazing sting
to consider for a calloused
briny fisherman
accustomed to barbs and hooks.

Not for forgetting bread
not for brash statements
not even for lack of faith …

but for the three times
Jesus pierced him with,
"Do you love me?"

Each inflection
a rooster's spur
raking an open wound.

Dana Ryan lives in Phoenix, Ariz.



I have a son made of words

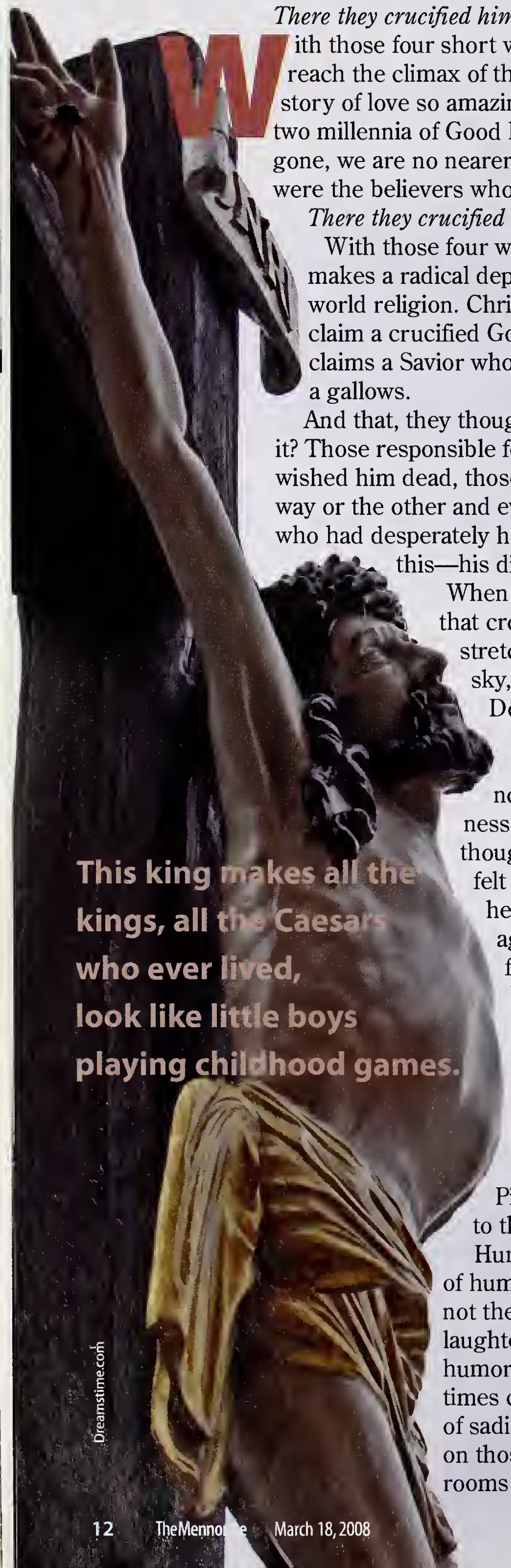
by Steven R. Cope

I have a son made of words.
He hangs on a tree where even birds
will not perch or sing.
The leaves are not green
and the limbs are crossed
and barren. But the lost
who look upon that tree,
after drying their eyes,
see not only life but beauty.
Oh son, make me as wise.

Steven R. Cope lives in Winchester, Ky.

It isn't over until

by Kenneth L. Gibble



This king makes all the kings, all the Caesars who ever lived, look like little boys playing childhood games.

Dreamstime.com

There they crucified him.

With those four short words from John 19:18, we reach the climax of the story of salvation. It's the story of love so amazing, so divine, that, although two millennia of Good Fridays have come and gone, we are no nearer to understanding it than were the believers who have gone before us.

There they crucified him.

With those four words, the Christian faith makes a radical departure from every other world religion. Christianity alone dares to proclaim a crucified God. No other religion proclaims a Savior who died a criminal's death on a gallows.

And that, they thought, was that. Who thought it? Those responsible for it, those who simply wished him dead, those who didn't care much one way or the other and even those, especially those, who had desperately hoped it would not come to this—his disciples, friends, loved ones. When they saw him hanging on that cross, saw him nailed there, stretched out between earth and sky, they thought it was over. Done.

What Pilate thought

Pilate, the Roman governor who had ordered and witnessed crucifixions aplenty, thought so. I wonder if he ever felt sorry for his victims. Did he give any thought to the agony of the ones he crucified? Maybe, maybe not. Whether he did or not, whether or not he even thought of it as a nasty business, Pilate knew somebody had to do it, and he was that somebody. And in the case of this Jesus, Pilate added a touch of humor to the event.

Humor? Yes, but not the kind of humor we call a saving grace, not the kind that brings happy laughter. Instead it was dark humor; gallows humor, we sometimes call it. It was the same kind of sadistic humor the Nazis forced on those they herded into shower rooms before turning on the deadly gas, a humor that mocks those about to die, shames them and so compounds the horror.

Pilate, the would-be humorist, had an inscription written and put on the cross: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." It's a joke. A sick joke, to be sure, but a joke nonetheless.

Get it? This pathetic, beaten, bruised human creature hanging on the cross is, of all things, a king. Isn't that wild? Look at him; he's the king of the Jews. Do you get the joke? You beaten-down, pathetic people who have been conquered by Caesar's armies, here is your king. Look at him. This is what happens to anyone who forgets who the real king is around here.

This is Caesar's joke. And to make sure everybody got the punch line, Pilate took the trouble to have it written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

Not surprisingly, the religious leaders didn't appreciate the joke. They got it, all right, but they were offended. They urged Pilate to do some editing, have the inscription read, "This man said, 'I am King of the Jews.'"

No way. That's not a joke at all. It may be the truth, but it isn't clever, it isn't funny. Pilate's answer was terse, authoritative: "What I have written, I have written."

What have you written, Pilate? Did you have any clue that eventually the joke would be on you? If only you had had a greater imagination, you would have created a better, truer joke. You would have had an inscription placed on the cross that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of kings."

The truth is, Pilate, your attempt at humor backfired. You were wrong. Just as all the so-called powerful ones in history have done, you thought you would have the last word. You'll show this "king" who's really in charge.

You see, Pilate, the one you condemned to death was indeed a king, one who once said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all people to me." And now he is indeed lifted up. His throne is a most unlikely one—two rough pieces of wood planted in the ground. But this dying Jesus is a most unlikely king. His kingdom is an eternal one. This king makes all the kings, all the Caesars who ever lived, look like little boys playing childhood games. What you thought was over, Pilate, has just begun.

What Mary thought

Hanging on the cross, the crucified one looks down and sees his mother standing there, next to a disciple he loves. He says to her, "Woman, here is your son." And he says to the disciple, "Here is

The tears of Good Friday lead to the gladness of Easter morning.

your mother." Both Jesus' mother and the disciple he loved also thought it was over.

The Fourth Gospel records only two appearances of Jesus' mother in his account. She is there at the beginning for the first miracle Jesus performs, at the wedding at Cana. And she is there at the end, when another miracle is unfolding.

What had Mary been thinking and feeling as she watched Jesus go about his ministry of healing and teaching? Had she been apprehensive? Had she worried he was getting in over his head? Had she heard the rumors that his enemies were out to get him?

Yes, surely. And now she must stand and watch as the child she once nursed, once rocked to sleep, the child whose boyhood bumps and bruises she kissed to make them better, this child, her son, is soon to draw his last breath. The agony of Jesus on the cross is hard to imagine. It is equally hard to imagine the agony of his mother, who thinks all her prayers and tears on his behalf have come to this—a cruel ending to her son's life.

What she doesn't realize is that her dying son is offering her the gift of consolation. By entrusting her to the care of one he loves, Jesus gives his mother a prelude to resurrection, just as every act of solace and comfort to grieving ones becomes, by God's grace, a step forward to a new reality. "In the midst of life we are in death," says the service for the dead. It is equally true that in the midst of death we are in life, the kind of life Jesus meant when he said: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25-26).

What the disciples thought

And the disciple Jesus loved, in fact, all his disciples—John, James, Andrew, Peter and the rest—all think it is over, too. All their hopes, their dreams of glory, are shattered. Gone are the opportunities they had to listen to Jesus as he spoke to the crowds, walked the road with them, always teaching, showing them signs of the kingdom. Never again will they see him reach out and touch a blind man's eyes and give him sight, break a few loaves into a meal for a multitude, calm an angry sea.

For Peter especially, such an ending is nearly impossible to bear. He who had promised to stand shoulder to shoulder with Jesus when the testing time came, he whom Jesus had called "rock," is devastated by his failure, his denial. Like the other disciples, he had turned tail and run away. Now that Jesus is dead, there is no possibility to ask his forgiveness, no chance for the broken relationship to be restored.

As he contemplates what the cross means, Peter can't imagine it isn't over. He can't conceive the possibility of resurrection. Peter is anyone—even you and I—who face the kind of desolation unable to see beyond the immediacy of pain. Our sin, guilt and grief can become so intense, so all-consuming, that it takes over completely. We may get to the point of feeling dead inside.

Like everyone present on the day Jesus was crucified, you and I may think it is indeed over.

What is our response? Is it tears?

Perhaps. Tears for his agony. Tears for our complicity in his suffering. Tears for all the sorrows that assail us in this often grief-stricken existence of ours that some have called "a vale of tears."

Tears are understandable. Tears are appropriate. But tears are not enough. And tears are not the last word.

It isn't over until ...

Resurrection is the last word. The tears of Good Friday lead to the gladness of Easter morning.

Something is over. For people of the resurrection, what's over is the long night of despair. What's over is fear that immobilizes our wills, guilt that cripples our relationships with God and others, self-hatred that blocks us from becoming the liberated, joyous people God longs for us to be.

Resurrection means that all the ills that plague us, even death itself, are swallowed up in the ending God makes possible: eternal life.

Resurrection means that all the ills that plague us, even death itself, are swallowed up in the ending God makes possible: eternal life.

Resurrection also means we are set free to give our lives in service to the world God so loves. Resurrection people know their lives have meaning, have purpose.

"Feed my sheep," the risen Jesus said to Peter, who had wept bitter tears.

And he says it still, to you and me: "As you look at the cross, are you weeping for me, for yourselves? I understand. But then, after the weeping, dry your tears. And go, feed my sheep."

And maybe, in response, we will answer as the hymn writer did:

"But drops of grief can ne'er repay
the debt of love I owe.
Here, Lord, I give myself away;
'tis all that I can do."

Kenneth L. Gibble lives in Greencastle, Pa.

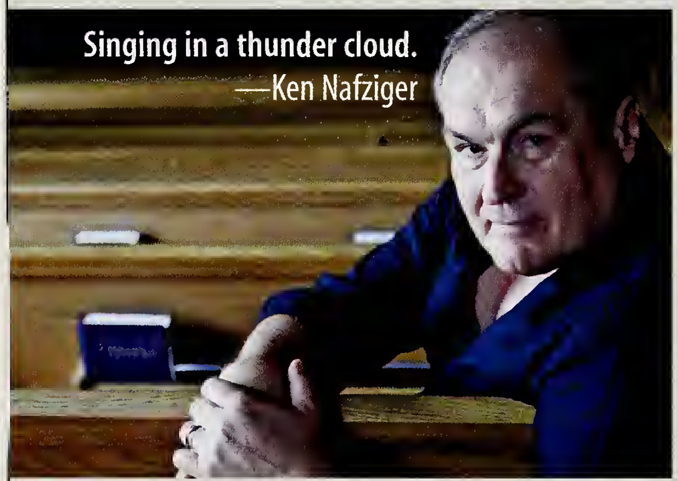
606

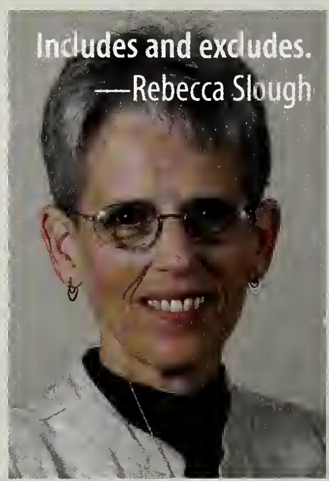
When, why and how do Mennonites use the anthem?

by Anna Groff

From T-shirts printed with "606" to fans singing it at Mennonite college soccer games when the clock hits 6:06 to the Mennonite youth singing it at Sea World at Orlando '97—many Mennonites use "606" as an identity piece, often in creative ways.

Some Mennonites associate "606" with Mary Oyer, professor emeritus of music at Goshen (Ind.) College, who introduced "606" during worship at the Mennonite Church convention in Turner, Ore., in 1969.


Singing in a thunder cloud.
—Ken Nafziger


Includes and excludes.
—Rebecca Slough

Ken Nafziger, professor of music at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., describes the experience in Turner as "singing in the middle of a thunder cloud."

'Soundpool':
Mary Oyer leads singing.

One of composer Jim Clemens' favorite memories of singing "606" is when Mary led it at the grand opening of the Goshen College Music Center in 2002. In fact, Jim says he couldn't sing and had tears in his eyes from the beauty of hearing that piece in that space.

Mary was first acquainted with "606" from Walter Yoder's *Songs for the Church* in 1952. The earliest version she has since found is in *Harmonia Sacra*, 1876. When she was first exposed to the piece, it "didn't strike her as anything special." In fact, she was more impressed with the hymn "The Lord has Risen Indeed."

But when Mary introduced "606" at the convention at Turner, she experienced the crowd's energy and thought it worked well with many voices—as well as not being that difficult to sing. In fact, she says, it sounds more impressive than it actually is. But at that point, Mennonites were not used to sing different words and different times.

Because the piece is not melody-dominated, Ken says, "606" communicates the sound of the community, as each part is important.

At Turner, "606" became part of Mennonites' identity and soundpool almost immediately, Mary says. She defines "soundpool" as music that is familiar, often repeated, nourishing, invigorating.

An identity piece for some

While "606" is an identity piece for many Mennonites, those closely involved with "606," have revisited the piece and wonder about its use and future.

"606" is a great thing for people in the Euro-American world but perhaps not for the Southern Hemisphere, Mary says.

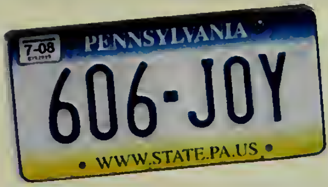
"It's not that other cultures can't sing it. It's easy for them to sing, and they find some pleasure in it, … but it isn't in their soundpool," she says. For example, she has sung it with students in Kenya and Taiwan. While Mary says she would never want to get rid of "606" or stop singing it, she thinks the church should add to it and continue diversifying our music with new sounds, rhythms and languages.

Last year, Rebecca Slough, academic dean at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., wrote a paper for a music symposium after conducting a study of the use of "606" in churches in Elkhart County.

Rebecca found that "606" is the Mennonite anthem for white, Anglo, educated Mennonites with Western European roots. For other congregations—those with members who are Spanish-speaking, new Mennonites or non-Mennonite educated—"606" is often outside their congregation's ethos, singing styles and soundpools, so they rarely sing it in church.

"It includes people and it excludes people," she says. "I would not want '606' to go by the wayside anytime soon, … but it is not the Mennonite hymn for all."

She suggests that Mennonites have several hymns that are important to and represent a variety



"We have had "606 JOY" as our PA license plate since the early 1980s. We chose it because it lets other Mennonites know we, too, are Mennonites, and it adds the touch of joy. Also it creates enough curiosity in others to ask about it, which gives an opportunity to tell others that Mennonites are Christians who love to sing their joyful faith. One time in an area not heavily populated with Mennonites a car went by that held up to the rear window a scribbled note, "Hymn 606."—*Paul Burkholder, Lititz, Pa.*

of Mennonite identities: Spanish-speaking, African-American, Chinese, Indonesian, Cheyenne and more. She says the first step would be to ask these churches what their music ethos is and what pieces are important to them.

"African-American, Asian and Spanish music leaders would need to teach the rest of us," she says.

Hymnal project issues

Tears in [my] eyes.
—Jim Clemens

When Rebecca served as the managing editor for the hymnal project in the mid-1980s for *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, she faced the controversy of whether or not to use inclusive language in "606" in the new hymnal.

"Many Mennonites were not in favor of the inclusive language version that the Church of the Brethren used, which upset people in the Church of the Brethren," she says.

The intensity surrounding the decision grew, and there was a one-year period where the committee did not discuss the piece.

Her role as managing editor required her to find a process to decide which version to include. In the end, the committee decided to provide asterisks at the bottom of the piece with alternate inclusive-language lyrics.

In a sense, everyone won—whether it was the way they wanted to win or not, Rebecca says.

Ken, who also worked on the hymnal project, says people wondered if "606" would still be hymn number "606" in the new hymnal. People asked him, but he did not yet know the final decision. He believes the question was a "facetious, lighthearted way of asking, 'What's going to happen with our tradition of singing?' "

When he kept facing the question he responded with, "If '606' really needs to be '606,' then there is the chance that it's become an idol."

Are we singing it less?

Perhaps "606" used to be an idol for some, but Rebecca discovered in her study that overall, Mennonites in Elkhart County—and perhaps in the broader Mennonite Church USA—are actually singing "606" less and are not teaching it to new members or children.

She found that 17 of 20 congregations sang "606" at least three or four times a year, usually as a climax for celebration or a holiday, but no music leader had a consistent plan for teaching the song.

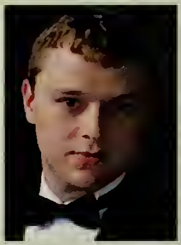
If "606" is only sung at special occasions, it becomes one more song people "get lost in," she says.

Bradley Kauffman, chair of the music department at Hesston (Kan.) College, also believes the lack of teaching "606" to new members and children contributes to this decline.

Bradley says "606" has less of an affect on younger Mennonites than it used to for a variety of reasons: Teaching singing is less a priority, stewardship of time has shifted from the community to the personal, and there are changes in sanctuary acoustics across Mennonite worship.

"This may be lamented for the loss of a unifying cultural trait but may also mark an appropriate lessening of cultural barriers to church growth," he wrote in an email. "I have known people from outside the church who were drawn in by a transporting '606' experience. I know there are others who have found it alienating."

Then he asks: "If the vitality of '606' is fading, broadly or narrowly—intentionally or otherwise—what are we replacing it with?"



What are we replacing it with?
—Bradley Kauffman

Anna Groff is assistant editor of The Mennonite.

606 stories: from Sea World to Cuba

Jim Clemens, a composer, attended the Mennonite Church convention at Bowling Green, Ohio, in 1981. A youth member in his group who was developmentally disabled liked to direct "606." Someone outside the youth group learned this and invited him to lead "606" in front of all the youth during worship, which touched many youth at the convention.

Everett Thomas, editor of *The Mennonite*, remembers when the youth convention at Orlando '97 filled the Sea World stadium for a private showing and sang "606" to Shamu while waiting for the performance to begin.

Ken Nafziger, professor of music at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., says when the group Sweet Honey in the Rock performed at Goshen (Ind.) College, one singer, Ysaye Maria Barnwell, was particularly impressed when the audience sang "606." Later, when she traveled with Ken and his EMU students in Cuba during the 2002-03 school year, she asked them to teach her the bass part to "606." She said, "Next time [I am in Goshen], I want to be prepared." Last fall, Sweet Honey in the Rock returned to Goshen, and she was able to sing along to "606" with the audience.

At Goshen College soccer games, fans sing "606" when the clock hits 6:06, often jumping up and down during the final "Alleluia" section.—*ag*

Personal mission

Mennonite higher education—part 6

by J. Daniel Hess

We call forth not only intellectual gifts but the development of personal mission. … Our goal is to provide students with the best content available and to teach them how to think and how to lead with integrity.—Mennonite higher education presidents

What does this mean in the lives of alumni? I talked with many graduates of Hesston (Kan.) College, Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, Va.), Bluffton (Ohio) University, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.), Goshen (Ind.) College, Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) and Eastern Mennonite Seminary (Harrisonburg). Even without my showing them the statement, they spoke to its contents.

Carolene Jackson

Lee Roy Berry (EMU, 1966) is an attorney in Elkhart, Ind. In 1962, he wondered if he should go "up the road" again with his migrant family to work the truck farms at Hartville, Ohio, as he did since childhood or follow a pastor's suggestion to go to college. He did the latter. Upon arriving in Harrisonburg, Va., Lee Roy carried his suitcase to Eastern Mennonite College, where he happened to meet professor Esther Lehman, who greeted him and, like many others on campus, showed him to his intended destination.

Dale Kempf (Hesston, 1976; Goshen, 1978) is a world-renowned research chemist with Abbott Laboratories. Dale helped discover some of the first drugs for HIV. He is exploring the uses of protease inhibitors for the treatment of hepatitis C. At Hesston College, "it was so refreshing to be in a place that believed the same as I did. There was something special about the place." He joined a Christian music group, Agape, which was a focal point for many of his early college activities. He chuckles, "I didn't plan for the future well." But chemistry professor Jim Yoder set a life-long course for Dale with the words, "I could use you."

A broader view of how to study the Bible.—Brenda Benner

Brenda Benner (EMU, 1989; EMS, 2006) tells of a professional sojourn that characterizes the experience of many youth. She earned a bachelor's degree in biology (with a minor in music). After a stint in medical school, she switched to accounting, passed the Ohio CPA tests and worked happily in financial-related positions. She took distant-learning courses from Eastern Mennonite Seminary to get "a broader view of how to study the Bible." She eventually enrolled at EMS and "loved it," graduating with an M.Div. in 2006 and Clinical Pastoral Education in 2007. Today Brenda is a pastor, licensed by Allegheny Mennonite Conference and secunded to St. Francis Episcopal Church in Somerset, Pa.

Carolene Jackson (Hesston, 1972) has made a distinguished career at Thomas Fay Custer School, a Head Start public school, and as a consultant across the state of Oklahoma, training those preparing to work in child care. She grew up in rural Oklahoma. Hesston College introduced her to a multicultural world, first through an interterm on a reservation at Window Rock, Ariz., where she learned of the consequences of injustice toward Native Americans, then in her second year through an interterm in Watts (Los Angeles).

Duane Goossen (Bethel, 1978) works in the executive branch of Kansas government as state budget director and secretary of administration. What remains astonishing to Duane, college introduced him to two interests that would mark his adult life—woodworking and peace studies. Wes Pauls and Rodney Frey taught industrial arts. The second interest developed from religion courses taught by Duane Friesen at Bethel College and a political science course taught by Lee Roy Berry at Goshen College.

Nathan and **Rochele Beachy** (Goshen, 1982) are physicians in Shaker Heights, Ohio, but have been able to obtain leaves to serve twice with Mennonite Central Committee in central Nigeria. In their first assignment (1991-93), they dealt mainly with tropical diseases and poverty. In their second term (2003), they came face to face with the fact that about 3.5 million Nigerians are HIV-positive, the third highest numbers in the world. "The Goshen thing"—SST in Belize and Honduras—an MCC fair and studies in tropical medicine convinced them "we knew we'd both go overseas when we

It took a trip to China to see the radiance of Christ in people willing to die for their faith.—Todd Friesen

graduated from medical school."

Before **Jeremy Byler** (EMU, 1999; EMS, 2006) went to Eastern Mennonite Seminary, he was a truck driver. Equipped with an M.Div., he continues to drive trucks. The meaning of vocation has been enhanced for Jeremy by college and seminary—learning from the mentorship of professor Caroll Yoder, living in Ivory Coast with a Muslim family, studying in France under the Brethren Colleges Abroad program, getting involved with the local refugee resettlement office. "Faith and truck driving are the constants of my life. ... I did not want to be a pastor yet wanted to learn as much as I could about Jesus Christ as Lord."

Todd Friesen's (Goshen, 1985; AMBS, 2002) passion as pastor at Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Church is to invite others to follow Christ, to encourage them to practice faith in their relationships, to be disciples, reproducing Christ's words and actions. He and Dennette, his wife, spent a decade oriented toward China, where he experienced a vivid call, growing out of his pastoral work with Chinese Christians. "It took a trip to China to see the radiance of Christ in people, people willing to die for their faith." He then enrolled in seminary. "AMBS was a coming home for me in a profound way. I was with people who loved God, who had global perspectives, and there at the seminary I received a solid grounding in Scripture."

Abikok Riak (Bluffton, 1994) is director of World Vision's U.S. government-funded projects in Asia, Europe and the Middle East. During this interview she was in the Philippines, overseeing a multimillion-dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Labor designed to withdraw 30,000 children from the worst forms of child labor and ensure their access to education while increasing awareness about child labor. She and her brother arrived at Bluffton as legacy students. To Abi, Bluffton was Middle America and conservative, but she found community in three places—with other international students, with a group of American friends "who remain close to this very day" and in the classroom—"Jim Satterwhite inspired my love for Eastern Europe."

Daniel Hege (Bethel, 1987), as music director of the Syracuse (N.Y.) Symphony Orchestra and guest conductor with other orchestras, conducts more than 50 concerts a year in addition to promoting music and the orchestra in central New York. Daniel first went to Bethel as a high school junior to summer music camp, then returned for four years of study with Don Kehrberg, Marles Preheim, J. Harold Moyer, Walter Jost and Kathryn Kasper. "At Bethel College I discovered that I could do much more than what I had previously thought possible. Going to Bethel was like being led to a panoramic window of possibilities."

Pat Hostetter (EMU, 1964, 1998) had a sense of growing up "in a womb" of religious provincialism. She dreamed of going to India as a missionary. Pat has indeed gone "out there," but not to India. She and Earl Martin, her husband, have worked in Vietnam and Indonesia with various international agencies, such as Mennonite Central Committee, Church World Service, World Vision, Catholic Relief and various other nongovernment organizations. Her most recent trip abroad was to Iran last March with Fellowship of Reconciliation. "Now the world comes to me," Pat says of her work at EMU's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding.

Edward Mendoza (Goshen, 1980) is a respected educator in central Indiana, where he is in his 13th year as principal of Westfield Middle School. Born in Monterrey, Mexico, Edward and his family moved to the United States when he was 7. At Goshen College he intended to major in physical education and health, but during his study service term in Costa Rica he was asked to teach English in a technical school. He points to that as a turn toward a vocation in education and language. "I have a sensitivity to people who are different. That was me when I arrived at Goshen. I'm attuned to the child of a single parent, the child of an underprivileged home, a child who struggles in class."

Cynthia Perkins

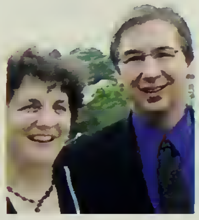
Cynthia Perkins (Bethel, 1977) has been a leader since childhood. "Maybe a better word for it was bossy," she says. At Bethel College she was co-captain of a fine volleyball team and went on to study education administration at the University of Texas. She is head of one of Indianapolis' magnet schools, which means she inspires and guides a staff of nearly 40 and oversees a curriculum in Applied Academics for Technology.

Calling forth intellectual gifts, developing personal mission, teaching how to think and lead with integrity—these are goals of Mennonite higher education. As a member of the church, I am grateful for these goals and for the many alumni who have applied their intellectual gifts with integrity to careers that fulfill their personal mission. And I am humbly grateful that our denomination has invested so deeply in education.

J. Daniel Hess is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. This is the sixth of six articles on Mennonite higher education.

Lee Roy Berry

Dale Kempf


Beachys

Todd Friesen

Abikok Riak

Daniel Hege

Being self-aware while riding waves of change

Iris de León-Hartshorn is director of Intercultural Relations for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership.

Each of my roles as a chaplain, pastor, agency worker and teacher has given me insight into the life of a church leader. I've discovered—by way of my own maturation process—that the best leaders possess three things: a sense of self-awareness, an ability to guide change and an ability to work with conflict.

This Easter season reminds us that change—and transformation—is an ever-present part of human existence. It's inevitable, and instead of resisting change or ignoring its presence, the best leaders guide it in a way that is life-giving and motivates those working toward an organization's or congregation's mission and vision.

Using change is like riding a wave on a surfboard. You use the energy and momentum of the wave (change) to get where you want to go (your vision). If you simply let change happen or ignore the wave's direction, you likely will find yourself turned over and looking for quick-fix solutions that ultimately delay or completely keep you from accomplishing your vision. Leaders should watch trends and predict the ways shifting paradigms and worldviews will impact the future and use that change to their advantage.

The inevitability of change brings with it conflict, which is why it's important for leaders to be able to work with it. Conflict is neither positive nor negative; it's what you do with it that defines you as a leader. You can use conflict as a tool to learn how you might do things better or work at situations differently in the future.

The worst-case scenario with conflict comes when people avoid it and let it simmer to the point that anxiety levels get too high and the conflict explodes. Little constructiveness can be found when this happens. As leaders, we should not be afraid of conflict. We should engage in it and work at resolving it. And before we can truly be our best while working at conflict, we need to be self-aware.

How can we be reconcilers of a broken world if we are paralyzed by our fear of change and consumed by a lack of self-awareness?

Of the three qualities I list as important to leaders, self-awareness is key. My most formative experience with self-awareness came when I was working as a hospital chaplain. I was called to the emergency room after a fatal car wreck in which the man who died had been drinking. To further complicate the situation, the deceased man looked like my father, who had struggled with alcohol-related issues and died at a young age himself.

I faced a grieving wife, children and other relatives in significant need of comfort and ministry. I realized I was getting personally hooked into what was happening and needed to remove myself from the situation. I went to an empty room in the hospital and took some deep breaths. Unhooked and composed, I returned to the grieving family and was able to minister to them in a way they deserved.

Self-awareness doesn't happen overnight. It takes time. You notice yourself becoming self-aware more quickly as you gain experience in situations calling you to walk with, minister to and lead people through difficult situations. Eventually you realize that getting personally sucked into a situation not only is not helpful for others but leaves you with fewer options and choices to be supportive and find solutions.

How does this connect to Mennonite Church USA? We are a church in a world that will constantly experience change and conflict—both outside and within our church walls. We have a mandate from Jesus that calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and all that we do as leaders has to be done with that love. We don't do it for our own sake but for the sake of wanting to become the church God has called us to be and do that in love. After all, how can we be reconcilers of a broken world if we become dominated by our inner conflict, paralyzed by our fear of change and consumed by a lack of self-awareness? TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **She sang alto**—Dorothy Nickel Friesen
- **The grandfather I never knew**—Ted Fransen
- **One little woman makes a big difference**—Polly W. Swafford

Mennonites and Lutherans keep talking

Two issues remain unresolved: baptism and relation of the church and state.

Leaders from Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) and Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) held a joint conversation Feb. 21 in Elkhart, Ind. The meetings—designed to help both groups with "right remembering" of the Protestant Reformation—included a capacity lunch-time crowd during a forum at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The event also made it clear that both groups have some challenges ahead if this ecumenical impulse is to reach more broadly into congregational life.

In the fall of 2006, ELCA passed an extensive declaration on the condemnation of Anabaptists. In it, Lutheran leaders said, "We express our deep and abiding sorrow and regret for the persecution and suffering visited upon Anabaptists during the religious disputes of the past."

In response, MC USA executive director James Schrag wrote a letter in April 2007 expressing appreciation for the declaration and said, "We are especially moved by the expression of 'deep and abiding sorrow and regret' for past persecutions of Anabaptists," and called for a blessing on "future collaboration between our two churches."

The "future collaboration" at the Feb. 21 meeting included a report from John D. Roth about the challenges ahead for Mennonites in this dialogue. Roth, a Goshen (Ind.) College history professor, and Paul Schreck, executive assistant to the ELCA Secretary, were featured at the event, entitled "Unbinding Each Other: New Possibilities in Mennonite-Lutheran Relations."

Roth listed four challenges as the Lutheran repudiations are communicated to MC USA congregations, pastors and members:

- The impulse toward vindication that would reinforce our smugness and arrogance: "We were the true Christians being persecuted, and now 500 years later we are being vindicated."
- Moving on: "This now finally allows us to leave the past behind and get on with the business of being good, generic American Protestants."
- Mennonites have appropriated a martyr pathology: "When someone says, 'I'm sorry,' can we give it up?"
- Ecumenism and narcissism: "It's relatively easy to start conversations with people who are quite different. The much, much harder thing is to initiate conversations with those groups who are just a little bit different. ... For Mennonites, it's Beachy Amish and Old Order Amish and Conservative Conference. Freud called this 'the narcissism of minor differences.'"

Schreck noted that two differences remain unresolved, however, in the ongoing Lutheran-Mennonite dialogue: the relationship between the church and the state, and baptism.

Mary E. Klassen

Paul Schreck (left), representing the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and John D. Roth (right), representing Mennonite Church USA, at a Feb. 21 meeting in Elkhart, Ind.

"A breakthrough point for us," said Schreck, "was the discovery that in the Mennonite ministers manual, Lutheran baptism is not automatically invalid. This is very important to Lutherans."

Roth, who also represents MC USA in the international dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and Mennonite World Conference, listed several challenges for MC USA in the future.

"The ELCA has a greater clarity about doctrine as formulated and who is responsible to speak on behalf of the church in an official way," said Roth. "For Mennonite Church USA with its congregational polity, it's been more difficult to know on whose behalf we are speaking—even at a global level."

This issue is particularly difficult around the unresolved issue of baptism.

"Lutherans would deeply appreciate a statement," Roth said, "that baptism practiced in Lutheran context ... would be fully recognized in all MC USA congregations. For reasons of polity, we don't have the authority to tell a congregation to do this."

Informal conversations between Mennonite and ELCA leaders began in 1986. The first formal meeting of representatives was held at Goshen (Ind.) College in February 2002. André Gingerich Stoner, director of interchurch relations for MC USA, said that no further formal dialogue is planned at this point, but "the next step in our relationship is to facilitate serious encounter and conversation between Mennonites and Lutherans in two or three local settings."

Gingerich Stoner also said another possibility is for representatives to be invited to each other's national assemblies.—*Everett J. Thomas*

When someone says, 'I'm sorry,' can we give it up? —John Roth

Year later, Bluffton remembers tragedy

Bluffton, Eastern Mennonite University play game missed after bus accident.

Kelli Cardinal/*The Lima News*

The Bluffton (Ohio) University baseball team prays before the March 2 game in Sarasota, Fla., against Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

One year ago, the Bluffton (Ohio) University baseball team experienced an accident that would forever change them. On March 2, the team, supported by a crowd of 250, played the baseball game in Sarasota, Fla., they never got a chance to play last March—against Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

"These two teams of fine student-athletes and coaches share a common history," said James Harder, Bluffton president, in his pregame comments.

"They were to play each other on this same field one year ago today. But the game never occurred due to the Bluffton team's bus accident early that morning. Now, exactly one year later, this first game of Bluffton's 2008 season is a game full of hope and new beginnings."

On March 2, 2007, the Bluffton Beavers baseball team was traveling to Sarasota when its charter bus fell off an overpass in Atlanta, killing four student athletes, the bus driver and the bus driver's wife, and injuring 28 others. A fifth student athlete died one week later.

The game between the Beavers and the Royals one year later ended in a 4-3 Royals victory.

"In so many ways, this game has deep meaning and significance," said Harder. "It's a game played in the presence of many … who have come to show their support. It's also a game played in the memory of five from the Bluffton team—Zachary Arend, David Betts, Scott Harmon, Cody Holp and Tyler Williams—whom we will always hold close to our hearts."

The Beavers spent the remainder of the week in Fort Myers, Fla. for the Gene Cusic Classic.

"We're going to spend our week here doing what we came down here to do: play baseball," said James Grandey, Bluffton's head coach. "We knew coming down here that we'd have a lot of emotions with us, but that's to be expected. The players are focused on doing what they can, and right now, that means playing baseball."

On March 12, the Bluffton campus and community held a service of remembrance with a private memorial beforehand to dedicate the "Circle of Remembrance," one of the components of the lasting campus memorial.

The "Circle of Remembrance" is composed of a circular walkway on a low rise adjacent to shallow right field, with a limestone-capped, brick semicircular wall, benches and landscaping that provides an area for gathering and reflection. It also features a centerpiece sculpture, "Touching Home," by Gregg Luginbuhl, Bluffton faculty-artist, that connects symbolically and visually with home plate on the adjacent Memorial Field.

The two other components include naming the baseball diamond Bluffton University Memorial Field and enhancements to the field.

The total memorial project cost will be more than $350,000. Bluffton University received $208,000 in gifts designated for the memorial project. The construction and development companies contributed $90,000 in materials and services. Bluffton will cover the additional $52,000 costs.

Weather permitting, the Beavers will open on their home field on March 18 versus Muskingum College, New Concord, Ohio.—*Robin Bowlus of Bluffton University*

Local people serving the insurance needs of Mennonites and Brethren in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

For information about home, auto, farm, church, or business insurance find a local Goodville agent at goodville.com or 1-800-448-4622.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Health insurance proposal to be tested

Mennonite Church USA pastors, church workers would be included in plan.

Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership continues to work at a plan to provide basic health insurance for all eligible Mennonite Church USA pastors and church workers. Initiatives include a pastors' survey, finding options for sharing the cost of the policies for pastors, a conference for leaders who manage current insurance pools for Mennonite Church USA institutions and meetings with congregations to test funding models.

Keith Harder, health-care access project director for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, is working with a team of leaders that represent area conferences, churchwide agencies, schools and more.

"We are learning about the human cost and the compromised ministry," Harder says, "that results from inadequate access to health care. We are not content knowing that some pastors in our church are one illness or one accident away from a crushing burden of debt.

"Joining together to share health-care risk for our pastors begins to address the widening gap between those congregations with abundant financial resources and those with less access to financial resources."

All Mennonite Church USA pastors 64 years old and younger received a survey in February to gather information about their health care and health insurance needs.

The survey was not sent to older pastors because the health-care access project team assumes pastors age 65 and older use Medicaid benefits. The survey findings will be reported this spring.

A conference involving leaders from Mennonite Church USA's existing insurance pools was held March 10-11 in Middlebury, Ind. Participants included representatives from Mennonite Church USA agencies, colleges and universities and other institutions.

Before the conference, Mennonite Mutual Aid completed its work with the project team to develop options for sharing the cost of health care for pastors in fair and appropriate ways.

The results of this work will be tested with area conferences and in regional consultations with congregations from late March through June. This testing process will involve representatives from congregations—including pastors, financial leaders and other lay leadership.

By late summer or early fall, the health-care access project team will assess whether it is possible to establish a health plan to cover all eligible Mennonite Church USA pastors and church workers with basic health insurance based on the cost-sharing model presented at these consultations.

According to Harder, Executive Leadership hopes that if a new plan is developed, enrollment would begin in 2009.

"This project is about more than insurance," Harder says. "It is about what kind of church we will be and how we see God at work in our midst. A plan that will provide adequate health-care access for all our pastors will only come about as a work of God among us."—*Adapted from a release by Marathana Prothro of Mennonite Church USA*

Shuffleboard

Retirement is not all fun and games – it can be fun work.

Our free booklet, *Your enough,* can help you plan for a constructive retirement. Call us or visit our Web site today for your copy. Build something special.

(800) 348-7468, Ext. 202
www.mma-online.org

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

© 2007 Mennonite Mutual Aid

Wedding spans eras and continents

Burkina Faso village holds marriage ceremony for 'Son of Saraba' and wife.

Robin Entz

Zachary Heppner Entz and his best friend, Fuseni Ouattara, receive tokens of gratitude during Zachary's marriage to Robin Heppner in Burkina Faso.

The elders in Saraba, Burkina Faso, had a lot of explaining to do when they resurrected a traditional marriage ceremony last Dec. 31 to honor Robin and Zachary Heppner Entz.

"I didn't know the traditional wedding celebration honored the groom and bride together," said Madu Ouattara, a young man from Saraba.

Only people over 40 years of age in the village understood the protocol.

Zachary Entz is considered "a son of Saraba" because he grew up in rural Burkina Faso, one of Donna and Loren Entz's three children. The Entz family has served with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission since 1978 and Mennonite Mission Network since 2002.

After eight years in North America, Zachary Heppner Entz returned to West Africa with his wife of two years to begin agricultural development work in Mali with Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. Zachary met Robin at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg.

Because Burkina Faso and Mali share a common border, the Heppner Entz couple was able to join Zachary's parents for the Christmas holidays. The villagers wanted to honor the young couple but were unsure of how to do it, since their marriages follow Muslim customs.

"For the sake of doing something significant," Donna Entz said, "they resurrected this old ritual—a sentimental moment for those 40 and over whose marriages had been celebrated in this way."

Though the majority of Saraba's population converted to Islam in the 1960s, traditional marriage customs continued for another generation.

During part of the wedding ceremony, villagers gathered in a circle around the married couple. Women gave coins first to Zachary and then to Robin Heppner Entz to thank Zachary for the ways he had contributed to the well-being of the village during his growing-up years, such as helping carry loads of grain or wood in from their fields.

"This act would be remembered," Entz said, "and a small gift offered on his wedding day. Ultimately, this system worked to keep ties strong between the generations. A young man knew he would be shamed when few gifts were given, if he did not make an effort before marriage to be helpful and thoughtful."

An older woman, Muso Kura Ouattara, said marriage is more fragile when performed by Muslim ritual than it was in the old system because in former times, the tie between two families was built from the time the girl was just a few years old. The young man's family would do bridal dowry work in the fields of the girl's family each year.

"It is only logical that when the two are eventually married," Muso Kura Ouattara said, "the girl is treated with the utmost respect. You wouldn't want all that effort to be wasted by a marriage breakup."—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen for Mennonite Mission Network*

Less mortgage =
more ministry

Spending less on your church building could mean you have more to spend on ministry.
Get competitive mortgage rates from MMA for:

- first mortgage loans,
- construction loans,* and
- refinancing.

Plus, your lenders are fellow church members. Another good example of how MMA provides stewardship solutions to the church community.

MMA's first mortgage church loan rates:

5-year adjustable rate	**6.25%***
3-year adjustable rate	**5.50%***
1-year adjustable rate	**5.00%***

For a free information kit, contact the church mortgage loan department at (800) 348-7468.

*Rates effective Mar. 1, 2008, and are subject to change on a monthly basis. There will be a 1 percent premium on construction loans during the construction period.

MMA
Stewardship Solutions

King examines ‘sports-obsessed’ culture

Athletic director says Division I athletes often lost to the Mennonite church.

David A. (Dave) King knows he may be juggling a hot potato, but he’s prepared. And comments such as, “It’s about time,” when he addresses the topic, assure him that he has a message that needs to be shared.

King, athletic director at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., is concerned that sports has become an obsession in American culture. He believes that this fixation is keeping young people and families from gaining all the valuable benefits of sports participation.

King has been at EMU since 2005. He served 14 years as athletic director and middle school principal at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite School.

The father of three young adults, all of whom played high school and college sports, sees several cause-and-effect connections with society’s growing obsession with sports:

- Sport “specialization” at an early age that limits children’s ability to learn to play a variety of sports for fun and excludes, at a young age, those who are not “good enough” to compete.
- Parents at every game and sometimes even practice sessions can create unwanted pressure on both children and coaches. This phenomenon shifts the purpose of the game from fun and learning to winning.
- Sports so organized that the ability to develop creativity is greatly reduced. Kids do not learn some of the problem-solving and creativity that comes with free play.
- The all-consuming desire of student-athletes, coupled with pressure from parents, to get an athletic scholarship only to find out that sports at that level is a business. For many, the result is unfulfilled dreams and disappointment.

“I see what’s happening in sports as chasing the newest American dream,” King says. “Kids have expectations early on about what they want to accomplish or are being pushed to accomplish, when often those dreams are unrealistic.”

King’s concern was initially sparked several years ago by the book *Sports: The All-American Addiction* by John R. Gerdy, visiting professor of sports administration at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. King and other Lancaster area educators met with Gerdy to discuss ways to slow the troubling trend.

“It is becoming more difficult to recruit student-athletes to play at Division III schools like EMU,” King says, “because so many have their sights set on receiving scholarships from ‘big-name’ schools. Many parents push their children this direction, which exacerbates the issue.

“I’m fully committed to the value of sports and athletic competition … but I sense that many students and their parents aren’t viewing sports as a way to develop life skills but rather a means to achieve recognition and acclaim. Plus, I fear that certain values may be compromised or sacrificed in the process if their decisions are largely based on what they achieve on the playing field.”

Dave King

Virginia Mennonite Conference is in the process of licensing King for “specialized ministry” to share his message about the intersection of faith and sports. This ministry has the backing of the EMU administration.

“EMU sees how the intersection of sports and faith can affect not only families and congregations,” says Loren Swartzendruber, EMU president, “but also whether or not student athletes choose Mennonite higher education. When we lose students to Division I schools for athletic purposes, that sometimes means we lose them to the larger church.”

King has spoken to a number of church and civic groups and welcomes more invitations.—*Jim Bishop of Eastern Mennonite University*

Good (adj.): respectable, upright, worthy

Advancement Associates. Partners in your good work.

ADVANCEMENT Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Becky Drumm Principal
Rich Gerig Principal
Mike Wiese, Dan Hess & Sherilyn Ortman, Associates

Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

Correction: The men pictured in the March 4 issue (page 24) are not Kenyan Mennonite elders but tribal elders who invited Mennonites to plant a church and assist with spiritual and physical rebuilding.

CALENDAR

Mennonite Health Assembly, March 27-30, St. Louis, Mo.

WORKERS

Finney, Constance "Connie" R., was ordained as pastor of Sojourners Mennonite Fellowship, Belfast, N.Y., on Jan. 20.

Musser, S. Brent, was licensed as associate pastor at New Providence Mennonite Church, New Providence, Pa., on Jan. 27.

Sensenig, Karen, was licensed as lead pastor at Habecker Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., on Jan. 27.

Yoder, Chester E., resigned from his lead pastor role at Bowmansville Mennonite Church, Bowmansville, Pa., on Dec. 31, 2007.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Chupp, Adrienne Grace, Feb. 5, to David and Sara Rhodes Chupp, Goshen, Ind.

Gingerich, Elise Jenna, Jan. 12, to Kendal and Sue Roetlin Gingerich, Riverside, Iowa.

Herr, Canden Lee, Feb. 24, to Brandon and Alisha Yoder Herr, Elkhart, Ind.

Kulp, Allison Marie, Nov. 23, 2007, to Douglas and Kim Young Kulp, Phoenixville, Pa.

Mast, Matthew Merrill, Dec. 27, 2007, to Marcelo and Melissa Allebach Mast, Abington, Pa.

Miller, Rowan Ropp, Dec. 4, 2007, to Nate and Stacy Ropp Miller, Kalona, Iowa.

Nolt, Caden Nathanael, Feb. 15, to Geoff and Stashia David Nolt, Lancaster, Pa.

Roth, Elijah Miguel, Feb. 16, to Brad and Alicia Sertzen Roth, Warden, Wash.

Seely, Josiah David, Feb. 17, to Stephen and Valerie Jantz, Inola, Okla.

Unrau, Tobi Anne, Jan. 30, to Hubby and Rachel Brush Unrau, Inola, Okla.

Weaver, Wyatt Dane, Feb. 14, to Michael and Leslie King Weaver, Valparaiso, Ind.

Wickersham, Hayley Jade, Feb. 5, to John and Kim Bucher Wickersham, Huntington, Ind.

Yoder, Addison Lynn, Feb. 26, to Jerran and Angela Newcomb Yoder, Kalona, Iowa.

MARRIAGES

Ellis/Voth: Tyler Ellis, Wichita, Kan., and Becky Voth, Newton, Kan., Jan. 26, at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan.

DEATHS

Burkhart, Mary Elizabeth Gregory, 93, Brutus, Mich., died Feb. 15. Spouse: Menno Burkhart (deceased). Parents: Elias and Susanna Gehman Gregory. Children: Naomi Bontrager, Linda Boyer, Nancy Behan, Wayne, Arnold, Ruth Hartman, Marie Burkhart; 16 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Maple River Mennonite Church, Brutus, Mich.

Diener, Magdalene Wiebe, 94, Canton, Kan., died Feb. 17. Spouse: Charles L. Diener (deceased). Parents: Gerhard and Marie Wiebe. Children: Ida Huebert, Ruby Moore, Daniel, Gladys King; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Spring Valley Mennonite Church, Canton.

Driver, Rachel Anna, 80, Denver, Colo., died Feb. 1 of a stroke. Spouse: Edgar Anthony Marshall (deceased). Parents: Daniel Demuth and Cora Jeanette Driver. Funeral: Feb. 15 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

the value and values of a goshen education

Unique core values
Goshen's Christ-centered core values are passionate learning, global citizenship, compassionate peacemaking and servant leadership.

Educational value
More than 60 excellent programs of study, with internships and research for undergrads and visionary study abroad opportunities.

Financial value
Our graduates typically leave with less debt than the national average; 99 percent of students receive financial assistance, for an average package of $17,555.

Find out more about Goshen at www.goshen.edu

GOSHEN COLLEGE

Mennonite Church USA

Dyck, Martha Harder Suderman, 98, Normal, Ill., died Feb. 8 of congestive heart failure and a stroke. Spouse: Rev. Walter H. "Henry" Dyck (deceased). Spouse: L. Paul Suderman (deceased). Parents: G.A. and Anna Wiebe Harder. Children: Delores Ann Suderman Bartel, Charles Paul Suderman, Elvera Peters Suderman; 13 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16 at Mennonite Church of Normal.

Frederick, Franklin M., 91, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 18. Spouse: Naomi N. Frederick (deceased). Parents: Frank and Ida Moyer Frederick. Children: Sara Gehman, John N., Ruth White, Jane Rosenberger; 12 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Good, Milton Roy, 96, Waterloo, Ontario, died March 3. Spouse: Margaret Brubacher Good. Spouse: Eleanor Young High Good (deceased). Spouse: Verna I. Snider Good (deceased). Parents: Henry and Mary (Martin) Good. Children: James, John; two grandsons. Funeral: March 8 at Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo.

Heatwole, Jacob Earl, 68, Dayton, Va., died Feb. 21. Spouse: Susan Arlene Roth Heatwole. Parents: Eli D. and Annie C. Rhodes Heatwole. Children: Monica Hege, Melodie Rhodes, Merlynne Keener, Maretta Heatwole, Myron, Merwin, Maynard, Marileen; 20 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 25 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hostetler, Marie, 88, LaGrange, Ind., died Feb. 8. Spouse: Walter Hostetler. Parents: Amos O. and Thersa Hooley Hostetler. Children: Jane Moore, Judy Donovan, Maurice "Moe," Loren; five grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 12 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Kaufman, Carol Glick, 86, West Liberty, Ohio, died Feb. 19. Spouse: Paul A. Kaufman. Parents: Christian and Maggie Yoder Glick. Stepchildren: Stenley, Marilyn Brown; five grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Miller, Bonita F. Stoner, 63, Lancaster, Pa., died Feb. 24 of brain cancer. Spouse: J. Marlin Miller. Parents: Daniel R. and Fern Meashey Stoner. Children: Melissa Miller Menard, J. Michael; two grandchildren. Funeral: March 1 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

DESTINATION TEL HAI

Sandy,

I just wanted to write and tell you how thankful I am for our daily walks together around the campus. I appreciate our friendship and I'm so glad we live so close to each other. Tel Hai's community is rich with friendships like ours, and that's just one thing I love about being here.

Who said retirement was going to be lonely? I love it here!

Estelle

We're here for every phase of your journey!

Residential Living, Lakeview Assisted Living, Memory Support Services, Adult Day Services, Meadows Health Care Center, Rehabilitation Services, Child Day Care

1200 Tel Hai Circle | P.O. Box 190
Honey Brook, PA 19344
www.telhai.org | 610-273-9333

Tel Hai
Redefining Retirement™

panpha

Quiring, Paul D., 90, Hesston, Kan., died Feb. 15. Spouse: Mildred Quiring. Parents: Peter and Sarah Duerksen Quiring. Children: Gloria Jean Quiring Breit, Margaret Ann Quiring Wester, Dwight Paul Quiring; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Schowalter Villa Chapel, Hesston.

Roth, Irene N. Schweitzer, 96, Milford, Neb., died Feb. 14. Spouse: Roy Roth (deceased). Parents: John and Mattie Erb Schweitzer. Children: LeRoy, James, Janice Oswald, Terry, Verlyn Dunlap, Richard; 11 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 18 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Rupp, Luella Grieser Stuckey, 90, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 8. Spouse: Mahlon Rupp (deceased). Spouse: Cletus C. Grieser (deceased). Parents: Henry and Emma Yoder Stuckey. Children: Rosalyn Ledyard, Merlin, Dwight, Lynette Slaubaugh, Curtis, Bernard, Don, Darwin; 12 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Schindler, Floyd Carl, 83, Agency, Iowa, died Feb. 23. Spouse: Marilyn Luke Schindler. Parents: Clarence Irwin and Lora Hazel Widner Schindler. Children: David, Robert, Leon, Carla Skinner, Carol Neils, Marcia Holland; 18 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 27 at Reece Funeral Home, Ottumwa, Iowa.

Shank, Marlin Ray, 58, Sarasota, Fla., died Feb. 10 of heart failure. Spouse: Kim Miller Shank. Parents: Ray and Odela Sutter. Children: Angela Bielinski, Sara Kramer, Glenna Oliver; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 17 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Schmucker, Leon Ray, 76, Bloomington, Ill., died Jan. 15 of massive hemorrhage due to accidental laceration of his pelvic artery during hip replacement surgery. Spouse: Joyce Elaine Mishler Schmucker. Parents: Howard C. and Verna Lucille Miller Schmucker. Funeral: Jan. 19 at Mennonite Church of Normal, Normal, Ill.

Yoder, Edward H., 82, Archbold, Ohio, died Feb. 25. Spouse: Miriam Eash Yoder. Parents: Henry and Velma Miller Yoder. Children: Dan, Lamont, Teresa Stebbins, Greta Landis; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 29 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

***China learning tour*:** **Mennonite Partners in China** is sponsoring a learning tour to China, Oct. 9-25, 2008. Participants will visit Beijing, Xian, Sichuan province and Hong Kong. Tour includes visits to historical sights, taking in cultural events, spending time with Chinese university students and educators, meeting church leaders and interacting with friends and partners of Mennonite service workers. All tour arrangements and hosting by Mennonite Partners in China staff. For information contact Myrrl Byler at 540-432-6983 or email mebyler@mpc.mennonite.net.

Foothills Mennonite Church invites applications for the position of ***associate pastor*** with primary responsibility in the areas of youth and family ministry. Those interested, please indicate so by contacting Foothills Mennonite Church: phone 403-289-7172; email foothillsmennonite@nucleus.com. The job description can be viewed at http://foothills.mennonitechurch.ab.ca. (Remuneration in accordance with MC Canada guidelines.)

Goshen College openings:

Director of conferences and events to begin mid-April 2008. Assist on- and off-campus groups in planning, promoting and coordinating meetings, conferences, workshops and special events on the Goshen College campus. Lead campus master calendar planning committee. Bachelor's degree in business, hospitality management, public relations or communications required.

Catalog librarian, a .75 FTE, 12-month appointment, to work in the Mennonite Historical Library beginning June 2008. ALA-accredited master's strongly preferred with two years experience in cataloging in an online environment.

For more information and to apply, go to www.goshen.edu/employment. Goshen College is an affirmative action employer seeking a diverse work force.

Hesston College seeks applicants for a ***faculty position in English literature and composition***. Master's degree required; doctorate and teaching experience preferred. Qualifications include evidence of excellence in teaching, innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and to Mennonite Church USA. Responsibilities may include classroom teaching in composition; lower-level literature courses, such as British literature, American literature, Shakespeare, Introduction to Literature and a genre course. Position available Aug. 15, 2008. Review of applications begins March 10 and continues until position is filled. To apply, send curriculum vitae, transcripts, application and responses to essays (www.hesston.edu/employment) to Sandra Zerger, Academic Dean, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. EOE.

Celebrate fitness! If you are 50 or older, participate in the sixth ***Mennonite Sports and Fitness Classic*** sponsored by MARP and MMA at Goshen College June 26-28. For a brochure, go to http://marp.mennonite.net/. Register soon and save $10.

Hesston College seeks applicants for ***registrar***. Master's degree preferred. Qualifications include organizational skills, attention to detail, analytical mind, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and to Mennonite Church USA. Responsibilities include publishing and implementing academic policy, managing enrollment procedures and scheduling courses, maintaining institutional academic records, reporting enrollment and related data, working closely with faculty, admissions, and other administrative offices, and assisting the Academic Dean. Position available July 1, 2008. Review of applications begins March 10 and continues until position is filled. To apply, send curriculum vitae, transcripts, application and responses to essays (www.hesston.edu/employment) to Sandra Zerger, Academic Dean, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. EOE

Start here...where will you go?
Clinical counselor Omaha, Neb.
Nurse Wayland, Iowa
Marketing exec. Wichita, Kan.
Physician Tyler, Texas
Teacher Hydro, Okla.
Teacher Goshen, Ind.
Hairstylist Lancaster, Pa.
Nurse Engadine, Mich.
Nurse Hesston, Kan.
Teacher Dodge City, Kan.
Nurse Princeton, N.J.
Surgeon Wichita, Kan.
1995-96 Women's Basketball Team Regional Champs
Doctor, teacher, stylist, registered nurse, counselor, marketing exec...or pilot, pastor, scientist, artist, network administrator...
Your dreams begin at Hesston.
Start Here, Go Everywhere.
Learn more at www.hesston.edu
800-995-2757, admissions@hesston.edu
Hesston College
START HERE, GO EVERYWHERE

The **Salem Mennonite Church**, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alberta (45 minutes southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0; fax 780-662-0106; email salemchurch@live.ca.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks an ***associate director of development*** to raise funds for the annual budget, endowment and special projects of the seminary and to build strong seminary-church relationships. Qualifications include knowledge of MC USA and MC Canada, proven track record in development or marketing, strong organizational skills, willingness to travel, and Christian commitment and passion for the mission of AMBS. This position is full-time with the possibility to advance to director in the future. To apply, send letter of application, resumé and names of three references by April 15 to Leroy Saner, director of development, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, or lsaner@ambs.edu. See a full job description at www.ambs.edu/employment.

Associate pastor (full-time or part-time) with a focus on youth ministry is being sought for **Covenant Community Fellowship** in Lansdale, Pa.; www.cc-fellowship.org. Congregation of 170 was a church planting begun in 1986. Forty junior- and senior-high youth. Contact dennisgehman@comcast.net.

Western Mennonite School, Salem, Ore., positions beginning August 2008.

High school social science teacher. Full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred with a major in social science. Licensed in or be able to be licensed in Oregon.

High school Spanish teacher. Full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred, with a major in Spanish. Licensed or be able to be licensed in Oregon. Application closing date for both of the above positions: April 18, 2008. Contact Darrel Camp at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or dcamp@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Dorm leaders. Ten-month, full-time position. Western seeks both male and female candidates to serve as dorm leaders for its high school dorm program. Experience working with youth preferred. Responsibilities include mentoring students, enforcing rules, planning and supervising activities. Candidates must be willing to work with students from other cultures, promote a positive Christ-centered community and be willing to work flexible hours. Applications accepted until positions filled. Contact Zig Derochowski at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or zderochowski@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Western Mennonite School, Salem, Ore., position beginning immediately. ***Bookkeeping assistant***. Part-time. This hourly position is responsible for accounts payable, check reconciliation, quarterlies and payroll. Will assist in general ledger, preparing budgets and other assistance as needed. Qualifications include three years bookkeeping with fund accounting experience; prefer a degree in accounting. Application closing date: April 18, 2008. Contact Pat Rausch at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or prausch@westernmennoniteschool.org. Western Mennonite School, established in 1945, offers grades 6-12 to local students and students from around the world. Located on 45 acres in Oregon's Willamette Valley, Western offers a strong academic and faith-building experience. Western seeks exceptional candidates with a heart for youth and sharing Christ.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

EDITORIAL
easier with age
The Mennonite
when you can't pray

Subscribe TOGETHER and SAVE

If you would enjoy terrific savings on ***The Mennonite***, now is the time to form a **group subscription**. With our tiered-pricing system, groups of at least five members save more than $6 per year per person compared with the individual subscription rate.

Start your subscription today:

- Log on to our Web site at **www.TheMennonite.org,**
- Send an email to **Subscriptions@themennonite.org,**
- Or call Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498**

Goshen College seeks ***full-time American Sign Language faculty member*** to begin August 2008. Ph.D. is preferred, master's degree required in linguistics, education, sign language interpreting or a related field, ASLTA certification or working towards certification. All applicants will be considered. For more information and to apply, see the position announcement at www.goshen.edu/employment. With a commitment to building a diverse faculty, deaf individuals, women and minority people are encouraged to apply.

Spring Family Weekend, May 2-4 at **Spruce Lake Retreat** for intergenerational family fun, fellowship and spiritual renewal. Annual trout fishing derby. Concert by Higher Ground also open to the public 7 p.m. Saturday, May 3, tickets $5 in advance or at door. Weekend package, $299 for family of four. Call 800-822-7505; www.sprucelake.org. Spruce Lake is a member of Mennonite Camping Association.

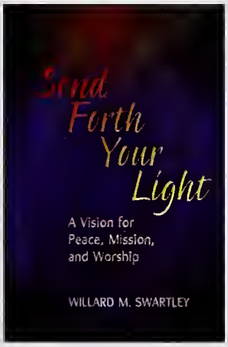
Conference executive minister sought to serve the churches of **Illinois Mennonite Conference** (IMC) beginning Jan. 1, 2009. Successful candidate will be located in the southern/western Chicago metro area and lead a dispersed staff in pursuing a missional vision in an inter-cultural, growing conference. Preferred candidate will be a convinced Anabaptist with significant congregational experience and an ability to work with various cultural groups. Requires communication proficiency (oral, written and electronic) in English with Spanish language ability a plus. Additional information available online at www.illinois.mennonite.net or request a packet at feedback@illinois.mennonite.net. Expressions of interest may be addressed to Tim Schrag at 309-533-0820 prior to March 30.

Goshen College seeks applicants for ***full-time gerontology and medical-surgical nursing faculty position*** in classroom, simulated laboratory and clinical settings. Doctorate in nursing or related field preferred, master's degree in nursing required. Preference is for candidates who exhibit both professional and teaching credentials. To apply and for more information, visit the position announcement at www.goshen.edu/employment. Goshen College is committed to a diverse faculty and Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Faculty members are expected to share this commitment.

Goshen College seeks ***special assistant to the president for institutional planning, strategy and research***. Participate in the president's cabinet and work closely with the president in the coordination of a range of activities such as strategic planning, integrated marketing, institutional research, board development and other college-wide initiatives; also oversees the information technology department, special projects and select programs as assigned by the president. Masters required, Ph.D. preferred. Strong skills in organization, planning, problem-solving and analytical ability; knowledge of information systems and of issues in higher education required. To apply, please visit the employment page of www.goshen.edu/employment and follow instructions. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with the Mennonite church.

Eastern Mennonite Missions seeks ***full-time director of Global Ministries*** to provide oversight of EMM long-term sending. Abilities required: vision- and direction-setting, administrative, relational, and public speaking. Candidate must have practical experience in and commitment to cross-cultural Christian witness. Begins Sept. 2. Apply by March 24; contact Jeanette Hunt at jeanetteh@emm.org or 717-898-2251.

Notable Titles from Herald Press



Send Forth Your Light

A Vision for Peace, Mission, and Worship

Willard M. Swartley uniquely unifies themes of peace, mission, and worship. He views peace and mission, both at the heart of Jesus' gospel, foremost as God's gift. For those who faithfully worship God, peacemaking and sharing the gospel in mission are the fruit of the faith. Foreword by Marva Dawn.

Paper, 350 pages, $18.99

I AM not A
SOCIAL ACTIVIST
Making Jesus the Agenda
RONALD J. SIDER

I Am Not a Social Activist

Making Jesus the Agenda

In *I Am Not a Social Activist*, Ronald J. Sider outlines his key ideas and central passions in short, easy-to-read chapters. Whichever stream of the church you identify with, you'll be surprised, upset, and affirmed by Sider's confessions of making Jesus the agenda.

Paper, 214 pages, $16.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

Lake Center Christian School in Hartville, Ohio, is seeking a ***full-time secondary principal*** (grades 7-12) beginning July 1. Lake Center enrolls 625 students K-12 with an additional administrative team of superintendent, assistant secondary principal and elementary principal. Qualified applicants will value teamwork, provide professional leadership in the areas of teacher supervision/evaluation and curriculum development, establish positive relationships with faculty/staff, students and parents, and have an understanding and acceptance of Mennonite (Anabaptist) faith perspectives. Resumés and inquiries should be directed to: Matt McMullen, superintendent, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632; email lccsmmcmullen@yahoo.com; fax 330-877-2040; phone 330-877-2049, x511.

Hesston College seeks applicants for the position of ***campus pastor***. Position is full-time nine months a year. Responsibilities include leadership of religious life program, budget management, and training and supervision of student ministry assistants. Qualifications include strong Christian faith, commitment to Mennonite Church USA and to Hesston College. Bachelor's degree in related field required. Master's in divinity with experience preferred. Apply by resumé to Lamar Roth, V.P. of Student Life, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; Email LamarR@hesston.edu; or call 620-327-8235 for information. Review of applicants begins March 10 and continues until the position is filled. EOE.

Good News Fellowship, located in Ferndale, Wash., is a Mennonite Brethren church of approximately 200 attendees with a heart to reach their community for Christ. We are seeking a qualified ***lead pastor*** to serve as part of an effective elder team that provides leadership in all areas of pastoral and congregational care. Visit our Web site at www.goodnewsfellowship.org prior to emailing your resumé to searchteam@goodnewsfellowship.org and look for the Good News Fellowship Pastoral Candidates link, or you may send your resumé to GNF Search Team, P.O. Box 1733, Ferndale, WA 98248.

Chaplain at **Mennonite Village Continuing Care Retirement Community** in Albany, Ore. 600+ residents, 350 employees. Part of two person chaplain department. Qualifications: seminary degree, ordained or eligible for ordination, board certification preferred or 1-4 units CPE. Full-time position includes up to 25 percent time as volunteer coordinator. Chaplain only .5 to .75 FTE. Competitive salary and benefits. To apply submit resumé and video or DVD of preaching and/or leading Bible study to: Teresa Moser, Chaplaincy Services Director, Mennonite Village, 5353 Columbus St. SE, Albany, OR 97322.

College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., is seeking a full-time ***minister of youth and young adults***. Seminary degree and several years experience preferred. Must be willing to contribute gifts to the pastoral team in at least one additional area (e.g. preaching, pastoral care, worship, outreach, discipling or administration). Knowledge of and skills in communication technology a plus. Compensation is commensurate with education and experience. Send resume to Kathy Harshbarger, secretary. Kathy@collegemennonite.org.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT. ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"**As a Bible professor and director of peace and conflict studies at Bluffton University, I have the opportunity to emphasize and live out in the classroom the Mennonite values of close attention to scripture and nonviolent action.** I love reading the Bible with students and thinking about how Jesus' teachings ask all of his disciples to be peacemakers. It is exciting to see students take Jesus' call seriously for their own lives as they are making decisions about what sorts of people they will be in the world."

– Laura Brenneman, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion and director of peace and conflict studies

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

Road trips, torture scenes expose war's truths

Anna Groff

Two valuable movies from 2007, through fact and fiction, capture how war affects innocent families—those in the United States and abroad. In the beginning of *Grace Is Gone*, written and directed by James Strouse, a Goshen (Ind.) College graduate and screenwriter of *Lonesome Jim*, Stanley Philipps (John Cusack) receives news that his wife, Grace, was killed in Iraq.

Grace Is Gone tells the story of a widower—a twist on the expected war story about a widow. Wanting to protect his daughters from the awful, life-changing news of their mother's death, he experiences grief's denial stage longer than usual and takes them on a road trip to an amusement park to keep their mother's death a secret.

Stanley and Grace met in military training, but the army denied Stanley deportation to Iraq because of inadequate vision. So when Grace dies in Iraq, he experiences survivor's guilt and perhaps humiliation as a father—and not a mother—left behind with children. Stanley also may face his previous jealousy of Grace's military position.

First the three stop at Grandma's house, where they find Uncle John, an unemployed 32-year-old who strongly opposes the war but disappoints with his inability to offer any concrete answers.

Strouse avoids establishing a strong political stance in the film but brings home war's destruction. When John learns of Grace's death and bluntly criticizes Stanley for not telling his daughters, Stanley, who has just wept alone about Grace for the first time, shoves his brother up against the wall, shouting that he should not be told what to do. John backs down—literally and with his antiwar opinions—and the shoving turns into a shaky embrace. This scene demonstrates how families with individuals who disagree strongly can still support one another in tragic times.

Stanley's denial of Grace's death also reflects our society's denial of the war. To distract his daughters he spends money on them—letting them pick out new dresses and get their ears pierced. Days pass pleasantly, but nighttime means insomnia for the oldest daughter—effects of missing a parent I had not imagined.

After they visit the amusement park, Stanley asks if there is anywhere else they want to go, but they want to go home. Stanley's weary face shows that he gradually admits to himself he must tell his daughters the truth. He delivers the news, still telling the girls their mother had an honorable death. This difficult scene moved me, as I often feel emotionally removed from families affected by war. Still, I resonated with the oldest daughter's question, "But what does 'duty' really mean?" Without directly answering that question, *Grace Is Gone* reveals war's unfair consequences.

Taxi to the Dark Side, an Oscar-winning documentary, depicts war's evil by tracing the torture and interrogation methods used by the United States since 9/11. It follows the story of a suspected Taliban, Dilawar—a taxi driver in Afghanistan—who dies of repeated kicks to the leg as a detainee and later is found innocent. Like the Philippses, war destroys Dilawar's family as he leaves behind a wife and daughter without a goodbye. Disturbing photos of abuse (many never previously released) expose the horrific secrets and dehumanizing practices at facilities in Afghanistan, Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, where there have been more than 83,000 detainees since 9/11.

During the interviews with now-convicted frontline guards and interrogators, I felt pain and regret as they told of the pressure for results but vague guidelines from U.S. government officials, who refuse to take responsibility for what happens at these facilities but pass blame to those beneath them. The investigations of tragedies like Dilawar's have looked down to the soldiers but not up to the commanders. The film also exposes the faulty nature of physical and psychological torture, which brings inaccurate results that lead to more wartorn families and nations.—*ag*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

BOOKS

Two books by Reta Halteman Finger are excellent resources. **Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts** (Eerdmans, 2007, $28) is a scholarly look at the "community of goods" in Acts 2, but Finger also brings out important implications of this early church practice. She draws on sociohistorical study and notes our modern bias against this practice: "A literal sharing of possessions, as Luke describes, cuts across the grain of Western capitalist assumptions and the sacred notion of private property." And she looks at current Christian communities that "challenge us to consider the racial and economic divisions that so casually and maliciously structure our lives." **Roman House Churches for Today: A Practical Guide for Small Groups** (Eerdmans, 2007, $15) is an updated edition of an earlier book that is an excellent tool for Sunday school classes to use to study Romans.

FILMS

The Savages (R) brings off the rare feat of combining tragedy and comedy. Jon and Wendy Savage learn that their father's girlfriend has died, and he is showing signs of dementia. The brother and sister haven't seen him in many years and now must place the father who abused them in a nursing home. By turns funny and touching, the film confronts us with end-of-life issues.

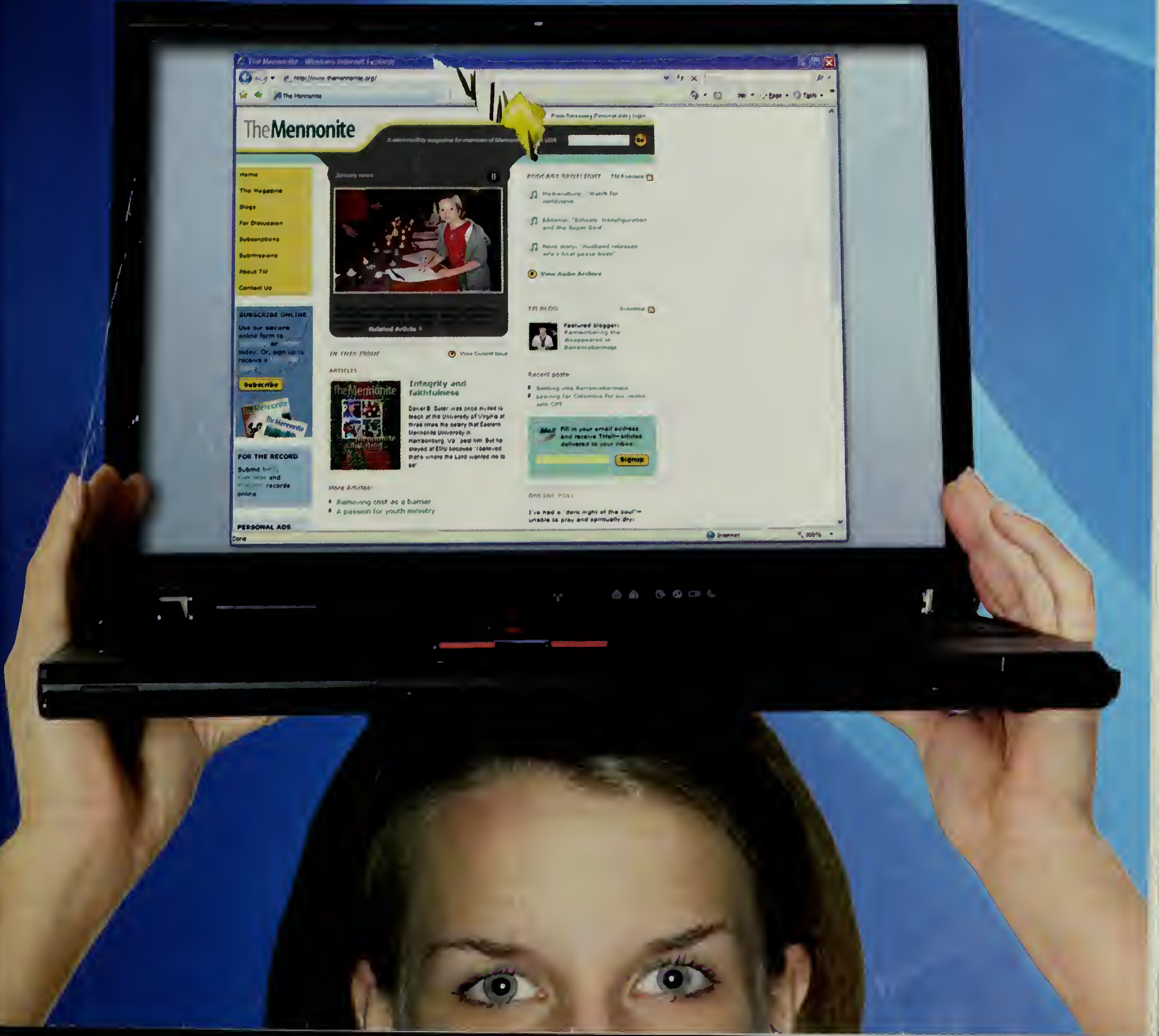
Persepolis (PG-13) is an animated film that tells the true story of a girl who grows up in Iran and witnesses the change from repression by Shah to repression by Islamicist rulers and the terrible effects of the decade-long war with Iraq. Her parents send her abroad for a European education, but she is miserable there. She comes to accept that, despite its flaws, she loves her country. This film offers insight into Iranian history and the suffering people there have experienced.

Make this your homepage

Make **www.themennonite.org** your homepage and get the latest news, photos, press releases and blog updates right away.

Since we post photos and news releases from all the schools, agencies and conferences, **www.themennonite.org** offers the most comprehensive news coverage available for Mennonite Church USA.

You can also answer poll questions, subscribe to RSS feeds and view videos.


TheMennonite
Home
The Magazine
Blogs
For Discussion
Subscriptions
Submissions
About TM
Contact Us
SUBSCRIBE ONLINE
Subscribe
FOR THE RECORD
PERSONAL ADS
Integrity and faithfulness
More Articles:
Removing cost as a barrier
A passion for youth ministry
View Audio Archive
Featured bloggers
Signup

************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 878 15-DEC-09 66994 36 32
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Gordon Houser

Radical meals

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him.—Luke 24:30-31

Day by day … they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts.—Acts 2:46

Eating together in a group marked not by k ship but by a common commitment to e dies Christ is a radical act announcing that er kingdom has appeared and is coming.

In her book *Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts* (see review, page 30), Reta Haltman Finger argues that "Jesus [practiced] a radically inclusive commensality [sharing food] as a key tactic in announcing and redefining the kingdom of God."

Many may not care much about scholarly consensus; others may wonder about what "radically inclusive commensality" is.

We don't think about the fact that 90-95 percent of Palestine's first-century population were rural peasants. And while we may spend little of our day thinking about where we'll get our next meal, "for a society with a subsistence economy, how food is obtained, shared and eaten becomes a very high priority," writes Finger.

We may look on that early Jerusalem community mentioned in Acts 2 as an idealized form that's no longer relevant to us, but people then did not see eating as a leisure activity. People depended on one another, particularly their relatives, to survive. As Finger writes, "Nobody in that culture would have been able to survive without the support of a community or kin group."

What makes Jesus' eating practices—and those of the early church—so radical is that he and they ate not just with people in their own social group but with people outside that group. Jesus was criticized for eating with outcasts, with tax collectors and sinners. The early church accepted at their tables "women as well as men, people of all classes, and even the former enemies of Jesus," writes Finger. That, in a nutshell, is radically inclusive commensality.

We do not live out this practice very faithfully. As Finger writes: "We generally live with socioeconomic equals and give a tiny percentage of our income to charity. The poor remain 'the other.'"

This also has implications for Communion. "The Eucharist (also called bread-breaking or the Lord's Supper) was celebrated in the context of a communal meal at which everyone, poor and less poor, ate," Finger writes.

We've lost this practice of eating together. In the Eucharist, our relationship with God has come to predominate, and we've neglected our relationship with one another, eating together across social boundaries. In John's Gospel, Jesus commands his disciples at the Last Supper to love one another, a command we mark on Maundy Thursday (see page 10).

Without necessarily eating our meals together as a church every day, we can eat together more often than we do. We may also try to find ways to combine Communion with a common meal.

My own congregation has grown through some people making the effort to invite others to their table. People have begun attending worship after sharing food with church members in their homes. Meals can still be a powerful way to be missional.

In our culture of private dining and eating on the run, such deliberate eating together with other followers of Jesus is a radical, countercultural act. Potlucks could become new means of missional activity.

If we learn to eat together across racial and economic lines, we will come even closer to the vision of God's kingdom, which covers the globe and includes people from every tribe.—*gh*

What makes Jesus' eating practices so radical is that he ate not just with people in his own social group but with people outside that group.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

w .TheMennonite.org

April 1, 2008

faithful followers

Pages 8-14

10 One little woman makes a big difference

16 Someone wise enough to judge

18 Income tax redirection and spiritual healing

32 *OurFaith Digest* and *The Mennonite*

Blessed are those who mourn

Isaac Villegas is pastor of Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship.

Her voice broke and left us in silence, except for the quiet sobs. Rebecca tried to regain her composure, but the tears wouldn't stop. I wondered if she wished she had not tried to speak, if she wished she had not risked sharing. Too late now. It's impossible to take back spilled tears. She broke the news, shared with tears and sobs. We waited with her as she suffered the pain of recounting the death of a friend's newborn.

This didn't happen at a weekly fellowship meal or during Bible study or in some other small group. These were tears shed at our church service, worshipful tears. As I sat and listened to her cries, I thought, What does it mean to give and receive these tears as worship?

I'm glad Dirk led the sharing and prayer time that Sunday and not me. My job was to join everyone else as we sat and patiently listened, then bowed our heads as he offered our prayers to God. Dirk lifted up this tragic pain to God without rushing toward a happy resolution. He didn't force Rebecca and us to turn this mourning into dancing. He didn't silence the cry with comforting words of impatient hope. Dirk offered her all we could genuinely give: our solidarity, the embrace of our corporate prayer, our sharing in her suffering. "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26 NIV).

Mourning is worship. Sometimes we worship with our tears. To worship any differently would be dishonest and deny what Paul affirms: We preach Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23). We misunderstand the message of resurrection if we think it means we must always rejoice in our worship. Resurrection doesn't mean we rush past the wounds of suffering in order to find hope. We too easily forget that the risen Jesus appears to his followers with open wounds. In John 21, Thomas can put his hand into the hole in Jesus' side. The crucifixion is not erased at resurrection; Easter doesn't rush past Good Friday. Instead, resurrection remembers forever the wounds of suffering and the pain of death. As Blaise Pascal put it, "Jesus will be in agony until the end of the world" (*Pensée* 919).

How can this be good news? It's good news because it means church is a space for Rebecca and her friend, whose lost child testifies to the unfinished business of resurrection. Further, she becomes our worship leader. Why? Because those who mourn are uniquely gifted to tune our ears to the reverberations of the Holy Spirit, who groans with all creation as we wait for redemption (Romans 8:23). Groaning is how we transform our patient waiting into a prayerful invitation for God's redeeming presence. Our worshipful weeping is our union with the Spirit of God, who "intercedes with sighs too deep for words" (v. 26). Mourning and groaning are the sounds of the Spirit. And if we want the Holy Spirit at the heart of our church, then we provide space for those who mourn to lead our worship. They show us how our body, if it is truly Christ's body and not a facade, is wounded and still bears the marks of suffering.

Jesus said, "Blessed are you who weep now." They are blessed because they teach us the language of the Spirit with which we communicate with God; mourners lead us into our communion with a crucified Christ. And the resurrection shows us that God listens to those who pray like Jesus did: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Church is the place where we learn this prayer, as the Spirit hovers over our darkness and groans with us. Our worshipful weeping is our hunger and thirst for redemption, for resurrection.

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 7, April 1, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

APR 14 08

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART IN

6

11

13

15

8 She sang alto
A tribute to Anne Stuckey—*Dorothy Nickel Friesen*

10 One little woman makes a big difference
Kommaly Chanthavong is savior of her people.—*Polly W. Swafford*

12 Giving thanks at journey's end
Holy moments emerge during a mother's last days while suffering from Alzheimer's disease.—*Leona Dueck Penner*

14 The grandfather I never knew
A trip to the grave of a martyred grandfather—*Ted Fransen*

16 Someone wise enough to judge
Is it time for a Mennonite ombuds-team?—*David A. Shank*

19 Electronics threaten camps, traditions
Campers want Internet connections and cell-phone service, ignore nature.—*Anna Groff*

20 Executive Board wants radical changes

22 Woman sees 'man in white' in dream

24 Jamaica conference celebrates 50 years

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Blessed are those who mourn—*Isaac Villegas*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking out
Income tax redirection and spiritual healing—*Stanley Bohn*

26 For the record

30 Real families
Blood ties and kin-dom—*Regina Shands Stoltzfus*

32 Editorial
OurFaith Digest and *The Mennonite*—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Dreamstime.com

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Lamb of God

It will be interesting to see what sort of responses to Everett J. Thomas' article "Agnus Dei: Lamb of God" (March 18) you get. What Thomas wrote is extremely hard to communicate in words alone. To actually know that God loves me requires more than Sunday school talk. I must have a deeply personal experience. Even saying that doesn't do justice to the daily, eternal affair with such a wildly flamboyant lover.

To somehow discover that the Creator God made and gave the very essence and totality of creation for me is one thing. But to see and hear and feel that very Person, that Presence—for lack of a better way to say it—is a "divine orgasm." Congregational members would do well to read the article together and, after much prayer, share in conversation about their experiences. Leave the "loving our neighbor as ourselves" for a much later conversation, since we are already drenched in the mad rush to do that.

When I talk to my nonchurch family and friends about this God, I always speak in as simple, everyday language as possible what Thomas expressed so ably to those of us who should already know it. Few of us in the church have a grip on what he has written.—*Gil Reed, Napanee, Ind.*

Ordination of women

Regarding women, church leadership and Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference (March 4): Imagine what could happen if every person in camp one intentionally partners a whole year with one person in camp two. Best of all, may we finally experience peacemaking by building new, secure, beautiful bridges of mutual respect and understanding. As the song goes, "May they know we are Christians by our love."—*Joanne Hess Siegrist, Bird In Hand, Pa.*

Mennonites and Lutherans

The article "Mennonites and Lutherans Keep Talking" (March 18) reports that the issue of infant baptism remains unresolved. One possible response might be that "Mennonite congregations are encouraged to accept Lutheran members who desire to affiliate with a Mennonite congregation by transfer of membership." This is a step I could accept. Congregations would then need to decide whether the children of such members will not be baptized as infants but be encouraged to be baptized upon their own confession of faith.—*David L. Habegger, Newton, Kan.*

Gather 'Round ad too quiet

Perhaps *The Mennonite* is not the right place to comment about ads in other publications. But sitting at a Jim Wallis lecture in Denver on March 2, I glanced through the current copy of *Sojourners* magazine and was pleased to find an attractive ad for the *Gather 'Round* Christian education curriculum. Perhaps there is some strategy—although I can't imagine what—for not identifying in any way that this is a product of Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. Branding is almost as big a buzz word as missional in our church these days. Looks in this case like the quiet in the land are determined to stay so rather than say so.—*Jerry S. Kennell, Fort Collins, Colo.*

Mennonite Publishing Network responds

We're glad Kennel noticed the *Gather 'Round* ad in *Sojourners*. And thanks for calling to our attention that we omitted the tagline identifying the Mennonite and Church of the Brethren publishers. This was an oversight, not part of a strategy to hide the brand under a bushel. We agree with Kennel's call to be up front and open about the Mennonite and Anabaptist brand. And we're pleased with the growing number of *Gather 'Round* curriculum users from other denominations.—*Ron Rempel, executive director, Mennonite Publishing Network*

Pay debt to MPH retirees

I have waited a long time to write this letter because I wish history was different. I refer to two sad chapters in our publishing history. The first chapter is dramatically written in the book *Bless the Lord, O My Soul*. It deals with the publishing

IN THIS ISSUE

People like to read about people, and four very different stories are featured in this issue. Dorothy Nickel Friesen reflects on her relationship with the late Anne Stuckey (page 8), Polly W. Swafford describes Kommaly Chanthavong's silk production for Ten Thousand Villages stores (page 10), Leona Dueck Penner reminisces about holy moments with her mother before she died (page 12), and Ted Fransen tells of his journey to honor his grandfather, who was executed on Sept. 11, 1941 (page 14). There is also some important news in this issue. Assistant editor Anna Groff reports on the difficulties facing Mennonite camps as fewer people want to experience nature (page 19), and an Executive Board release describes the radical changes the EB wants for Mennonite Church USA structures (page 20). Finally, we note the advertisement on page 31; it asks you to support not only *The Mennonite* but also *OurFaith Digest*. The editorial (page 32) explains why the board of directors for *The Mennonite* agreed to acquire this free magazine.—*Editor* work of John F. Funk (my mother's minister for a time). Funk had many misfortunes. One misfortune was that he was promised a $500 ("as long as [he] lived … whether he did anything or not") annual pension and part payment of the publication from the early predecessor of Mennonite Publishing Network. He lived more than 20 years more. The way I read it, Funk received one payment of $500, later reduced to $200 paid once. "So $700 was the total amount Funk ever received personally for the sale of all his publications," says the book. He never wanted to talk about it the rest of his life.

The second sad chapter is that some of the retirees from Mennonite Publishing House have never gotten their full payment. Some months ago it was happily published that the Mennonite Publishing Network was out of debt ("A Debt Repayment Milestone and Challenge," Ron Rempel, Sept. 18, 2007). I don't think so. "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another," says Romans 13:8 (NIV). I urge that we pay the outstanding debt to the MPH retirees. It is too late to pay our debt to brother Funk. But as I read that chapter in his biography, I had a great deal of sadness, even tears. Maybe that chapter should be read by the members of the board of Mennonite Publishing Network. Peace to us all. We are all in it together.—*Carl L. Smeltzer, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Disappointed by leaders

It is with sadness that we write this letter. We understand that a minister from the Unitarian Universalist group was used as a leader in the worship music retreat at Laurelville (Pa.) Mennonite Church Center that took place in January. We are not sure how this happened, but we feel it was wrong to use such a person based on what this group believes and practices. We feel this is a violation of our trust in the judgment of our church leadership. We wanted you to hear our concern as lay members of the Mennonite church.—*Marlin and Rose Zook, Dalton, Ohio*

Retreat leaders respond

Our Music and Worship Leader's retreat has been rooted in Christ-centered worship for more than 20 years. The 2008 retreat was no exception. Rosemary Bray McNatt, a Unitarian Universalist minister, was invited to be a part of the resource team in an interfaith dialogue. As a skilled orator, we felt that Rosemary had wisdom to share in the craft of oral presentation—be it spoken, sung or acted. We trust that God used the program, with the interfaith dialogue, to strengthen our congregations and our commitment to sharing the good news of Christ. That said, we have heard the concern and will keep it in mind for future program decisions.—*Erin Clymer, program director, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center; Kenneth J. Nafziger, professor of music, Eastern Mennonite University; Marlene Kropf, congregational and ministerial leadership, Mennonite Church USA*

Why is school closing?

In the March 18 issue of *The Mennonite* is a news article about Mennonite Education Agency's Annual Report. The article says, "The value of Mennonite education should be revealed because of the important role these institutions and programs play in providing a foundation for the church of today and the future."

If this is true, why does Chicago Mennonite Learning Center have to close its doors at the end of the current school year? I would like to propose that all Mennonite churches who have scholarship programs give the equivalent of one scholarship a year to one of the urban Mennonite schools or a scholarship to a local Mennonite school for a local African-American or Hispanic student. This would be one of the most effective ways to break down racial prejudice in the Mennonite church.—*Elvina Martens, Goshen, Ind.*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Pranks on April Fool's Day: (53 votes)

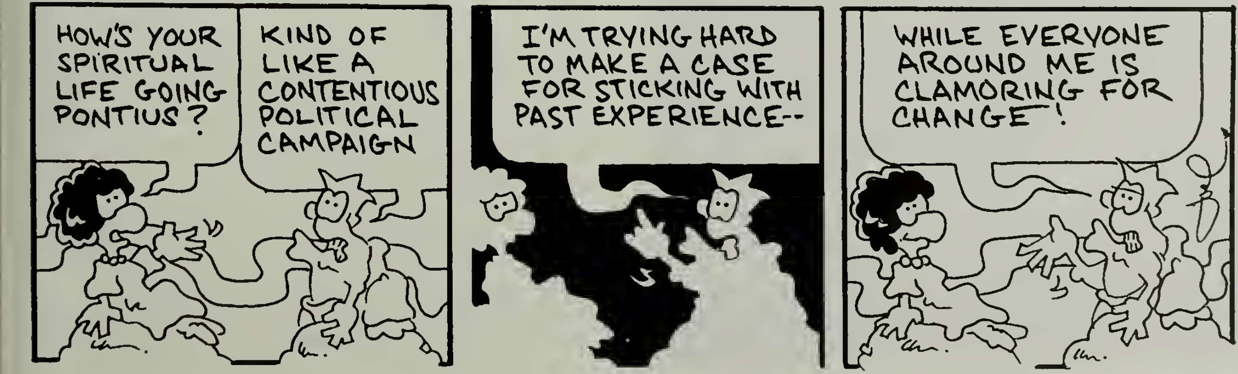
- ○ are light-hearted and fun. (57%)
- ○ are pointless and mean-spirited. (23%)
- ○ Not sure (21%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Note: The Goshen, Ind., office of *The Mennonite* will be closed April 7-11. To reach a member of the staff during this week, call 866-866-2872 or email gordonh@themennonite.org.

Pontius' Puddle

Joel Kauffmann


HOW'S YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE GOING PONTIUS?
KIND OF LIKE A CONTENTIOUS POLITICAL CAMPAIGN
I'M TRYING HARD TO MAKE A CASE FOR STICKING WITH PAST EXPERIENCE--
WHILE EVERYONE AROUND ME IS CLAMORING FOR CHANGE!

IN BRIEF

Bridgefolk names Kent Yoder new executive director

Bridgefolk, which promotes dialogue between Catholics and Mennonites, has named Kent Yoder of Goshen, Ind., its new executive director. A student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., where he is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree, Yoder is a member of Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen. He has worked in the Geneva Office of the World Council of Churches. Last summer, Yoder helped coordinate the Bridgefolk conference held at AMBS. *—Bridgefolk*

Wrongly worded baptisms invalid

According to a declaration from the Doctrine of the Faith published Feb. 29, gender-neutral language makes baptisms null. Formulas used by some Christian churches to replace the phrase "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" are not valid in Catholicism, the Vatican ruled. The official note said those baptized with alternative Trinitarian formulas, such as in the name "of the Creator, and of the Redeemer and of the Sanctifier" must be rebaptized if they wish to remain Catholic or to convert to Catholicism. *—National Catholic Reporter*

Peace church pastor arrested in Sri Lanka

PHILADELPHIA—West Philadelphia Mennonite Church (WPMC) has reported the arrest and imprisonment of Manohar Huthin, pastor of Gospel Grace Church in Mannar, Sri Lanka. Charges against him are not known. Mannar Island is a small island off the northwest coast of the main island.

Manohar came to the United States to receive religious training. He attended WPMC in the late 1980s and was a pastoral intern there in 1990. He then went to India, where he lived as a refugee. While there, he attended the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Calcutta in 1997.

In 1998, he returned to the United States, and in 1999 he studied at the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va. Back in Sri Lanka, Manohar has maintained a peace witness, and his congregation is known as a peace church, a rarity in his country.

WPMC has continued regular contact with Manohar and has provided some financial support for him and his church's projects, including post-tsunami relief.

Manohar's church is asking for prayer on his behalf, and Amnesty International has been alerted to his situation.—*Mennonite World Conference*

Lehman: Use tax rebate for kingdom work

PITTSBURGH—Many Mennonite Church USA households will receive a tax rebate as part of the U.S. government's economic stimulus package this spring. While the goal of the rebate is to encourage spending in an effort to boost the national economy, Mennonite Church USA invites its members to view this rebate as an opportunity to do kingdom work rather than make consumer purchases.

CMU photo

Canadian students head south to help in Alabama

Canadian Mennonite University students Jotham Penner of Kitchener, Ont., and Noelle Koop of Winnipeg work on a roof in Mobile, Ala., volunteering with Mennonite Disaster Service. Nine CMU students, during the Feb. 18-22 university reading week, went to Mobile to help repair homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina. This was the third year in a row that students from CMU have gone south during reading week to serve with MDS.—*CMU*

"As Mennonites have become so assimilated into society, sometimes it's hard to stand against trends," says Marty Lehman, financial development director for Mennonite Church USA. "[With this tax rebate] we are all supposed to go out and be consumers. But we are already struggling with consumerism." Giving this money to the church and charitable organizations is a way to act counterculturally, she says.

Members of Lehman's congregation, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., plan to pool their tax rebate money before giving it away. Lehman encourages other congregations to do this, as pooled money has a bigger impact. A congregation of 30 households could receive as much as $25,000.

She hopes people give their entire rebate, but if a household is unable, she advocates backward tithing—keeping 10 percent and giving the rest.

Lehman mentions Mennonite Church USA projects for redirection of tax rebates: motorbikes for Mennonite pastors in Congo; young people to attend a Mennonite college or university; Instituto Bíbilico Anabautista, which offers leadership courses for Spanish-speaking Mennonite leaders; Mennonite Voluntary Service; helping antiracism by helping provide resources, training and coaching.—*Anna Groff*

Lutherans honor Mennonite congregation

SIOUX FALLS, S.D.—For a dozen years, a Sioux Falls congregation and Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) have provided workers for a local agency. This year, the agency offered its thanks.

Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota selected Sermon on the Mount Mennonite Church as its Distinguished Congregational Partner of the Year Jan. 24 at its staff and volunteer banquet.

The congregation has helped Lutheran Social Services ministries furnish and set up apartments for refugee families and supported these families as they settle into life in Sioux Falls.

For 12 years, Sermon on the Mount Mennonite Church has sponsored MVS participants who have worked alongside them in ministry. More than 20 of these participants have served with Lutheran Social Services' Refugee and Immigration Center program.

Cheryl Lehmann, a member of the church and the local MVS unit coordinator, accepted the

Jim Bishop

U students do service over spring break
stern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, Va.) students idi Hershberger (left), a sophomore from Boyertown, Pa., d Eliza Barnhart, a senior from Rickreall, Ore., tell stories m their week with Jubilee Partners in Comer, Ga. Four oups of EMU students spent their midsemester break in rly March doing service projects under the auspices of the ung People's Christian Association (YPCA). They shared ghlights of their experience in a March 12 chapel.—*EMU*

award for the congregation.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Loewens donate nature preserve to CMU

WINNIPEG—Walter and Elly Loewen 25 years ago purchased property at East Braintree, Man., about 100 kilometers east of Winnipeg. It is a 700-acre nature preserve of forest, fields and peat bogs, bisected by the Boggy River.

At a March 12 ceremony, the Loewens formally signed use of the property over to Canadian Mennonite University to create the Braintree Creation Care Centre of CMU.

Besides the land, much of which is protected by a Nature Conservancy agreement that will keep it in its pristine condition, the property contains a two-story lodge, three rustic cabins and a modern bungalow, along with other assorted buildings.

With the property, the Loewens, who are members of East Braintree Community Church, are donating $250,000 over five years for operations.

Loewen, founder and former President of Yamaha Canada Music Ltd., said he hopes the donation will "inspire students and others to commit themselves to the furtherance of the Lord's work by learning how to look after his creation."

CMU president Gerald Gerbrandt said the Creation Care Centre will also do research about the environment and care of creation and serve as a retreat and teaching center.

Glen Klassen, who teaches biology at CMU, will serve as director of research for the center, oversee the transition of ownership of the property from the Loewens to CMU and work on refining and developing the vision and program for the center. —*CMU*

Goshen students open shoe business

GOSHEN, Ind.—A shift in trends led two Goshen College senior business majors toward a custom shoe and apparel design business that culminated in the conception of Springer Design, Inc. Mark Springer and Tyler Springer received an entrepreneurship grant of $5,000 last December to help get their customizing shoe business kicking as a result of their innovative idea.

Although unrelated, the two took their same last name as a sign to combine their talents and produce a screen-printing, embroidery and logo development company and begin specializing in custom, intricately designed shoes.

The Springers were aided by an entrepreneurship grant from the Goshen College Business Department's Entrepreneurship Learning Center, which encourages students to start their own businesses and is intended to keep Indiana college graduates in the state.

Their plan hatched after the two classmates had a lunchtime epiphany and discovered their similar aspirations and complementary interests. Mark, from Stanford, Ill., had hoped to start his own design business but wasn't as comfortable with the management and sales responsibilities. Tyler, a native of Carlisle, Pa., had plans to start his own screen-printing and embroidery business, but the artwork associated with it was a deterrent.

According to Tyler, by the end of their meal it was clear they ought to combine their talents and start a company.—*Goshen College*

Kansas Mennonites advocate for health care

NEWTON, Kan.—Members of the Western District Conference (WDC) health and wellness task force spent March 12 at the capitol in Topeka to advocate for health-care policy reform in Kansas.

Twenty-three Mennonites from across the state learned about the legislative process, met with their respective senators and representatives and watched a committee "work" the health-care bills.

WDC is active in the Kansas Faith Alliance for Health Care Reform, an interfaith organization that promotes public policy that serves the citizens of Kansas with affordable, equitable and accessible health care.—*Western District Conference*

—compiled by Gordon Houser

IN BRIEF

Kauffman named vice president of admissions at Hesston

Joel Kauffman was named vice president of admissions and financial aid services at Hesston (Kan.) College March 7. Kauffman has served as interim vice president of admissions since May 5, 2007. A 1980 graduate of Hesston, Kauffman holds a bachelor's degree in history from Fresno (Calif.) Pacific University and a master's degree in education with an emphasis in athletic administration from Wichita (Kan.) State University. Kauffman started teaching, as well as coaching women's basketball, in the fall of 1987. *—Hesston College*

30-day sex challenge

Paul Wirth, pastor of the Relevant Church in Tampa, Fla., is asking his congregation to take the 30-day sex challenge. Married couples are encouraged to have sex every day for 30 days, and singles are asked to abstain from sex for the same period. The problem for married couples, says Wirth, is that life gets in the way of sexual intimacy; the problem for singles is that sex gets in the way of developing genuine relationships (tampabays10.com).—*The Christian Century*

Anne Stuckey died May 31, 2007, at age 54. See our June 19, 2007, issue, page 6.

She sang

by Dorothy Nickel Friesen

A beautiful alto voice was stilled on a rainy night in Illinois. My friend Anne, enjoying her pastoral sabbatical from Zion Mennonite Church in Archbold, Ohio, was on her way back from visiting friends in one of her "adopted" homes, Iowa. There's a chance she had rock 'n roll on her radio, an "oldies but goodies" station, but it's just as likely she was singing along with an aria or harmonizing with a gospel tune. Somehow—we'll never know how—the car swerved terribly and she crossed the median, was hit by an oncoming semi and died. The music stopped so quickly, like a broken connection. Her singing days were over.

This Anne, from Ontario, was the gifted alto who sang solos, accompanied by the sweet sounds of organ, piano, guitar.

I met Anne nearly 30 years ago, when we were at seminary in Elkhart, Ind. I remember her voice and the remarkable new thing that was happening under director Orlando Schmidt's leadership—a choir of men's and women's voices. While male voices had long dominated the musical sounds in the Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount, the advent of women students brought change to every part of seminary life. A four-part choir now learned classics from the past, chanted in Latin, but also sang heartily new songs of faith with a guitar, often played by a young tenor named Terry from Ohio. This Anne, from Ontario, was the gifted alto who sang solos, accompanied by the sweet sounds of organ, piano, guitar. Remarkably, I remembered this alto—possibly because I, too, sing alto, and it seems alto parts are rarely interesting and rarely memorable (except from *Messiah* by Handel).

Years passed, and I drifted to a city of the Midwest; Anne was off to Africa and to Iowa, following the love of her life, birthing two children and discovering her own voice in ministry. I dabbled in "women's issues and the church" from time to time and rubbed shoulders with others who were advocating for the full use of women's gifts in the Mennonite church. I saw Anne's name in publications, now a preacher of some regard. Ah, I thought, I know her and I like her. Later, we met at women-in-ministry events at various campuses, and I paid attention to her words.

We met from time to time, mostly by happenstance, and shared stories of mothering, preaching and church structures, of all things. We seemed to relish the challenge of needling the systems that seemed so arcane at times and absolutely damaging at other times. We laughed about our need to talk with each other because our dear spouses, Terry and Richard, had run out of patience with our repeated harangues about church politics and certain church leaders that seemed so incredibly inept.

In 1990, our friendship turned profound. I joined the administrative faculty at our beloved Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, and Anne

Dreamstime.com

alto

A tribute to Anne Stuckey

moved to southern Michigan. Neither of us was particularly happy with the climate or the stifling nature of the church regarding change. Our voices, one time, were on the loud side in a Perkins restaurant as we passionately discussed theology while waiting for our lunch. A woman in the next booth, finally turned around and said, "You two ought to talk about something more important than what God is like." We looked at our menus, then giggled. Two grown women being scolded for talking theology was just too much fun.

Anne and I met four times a year for the next 13 years. We drove to a midpoint Pizza Hut or a truck stop or met in the back corner booth of a restaurant where we were sure no one knew us or cared about us. We were so glad to see each other, then one said, "You go first," and the next two hours flew by. As we dove into our salads before the mandatory personal pan pizza, our conversation dove just as deeply into our spiritual faith, our vocation, our growing children and their joys and sorrows, our love for life. Our spiritual friendship sustained us when we faced critique and praise, strains in relationships and joy with new friendships, academic rigors and sermons we wished we had never preached. We offered stiff words if we felt the other was drifting into self-pity or becoming sloppy in their thinking.

She was a good writer, one of the best practical theologians I knew. She wrote the book on deacon/elder ministry. She set up (with others) the ministerial database with accompanying protocols. She wrote pithy, moving articles and preached biblically sound and practical sermons.

Anne laughed at me occasionally, but mostly we laughed together. Her sense of humor was enormously healing and often supplied in just the right dosage. Cancer attacked her body, and we shared the agony of invasive procedures and medicines that made her sick while making her well. The ironies of life did not escape her, and she, in turn, conquered that disease and went right on living. I knew she was a great pastor.

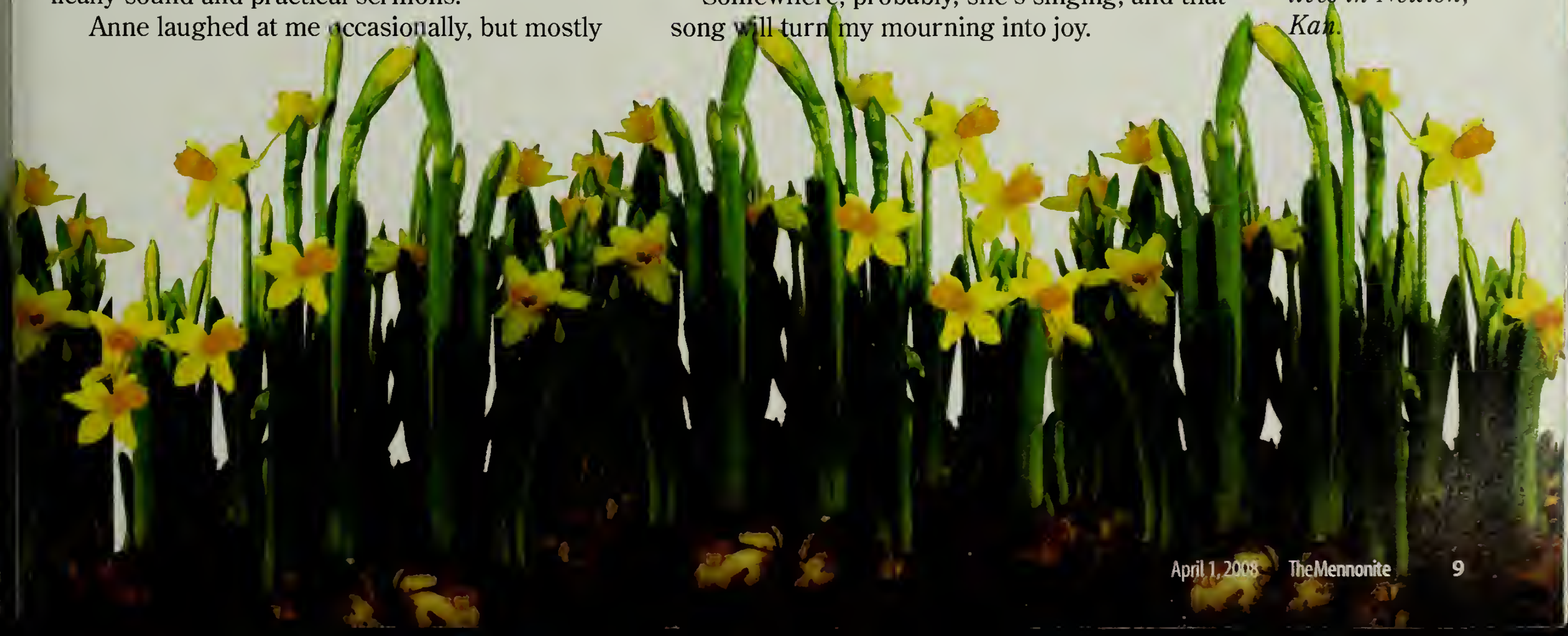
Our spiritual friendship sustained us when we faced critique and praise, strains in relationships and joy with new friendships, academic rigors and sermons we wished we had never preached.

Then, five years later and many hundreds of miles apart, we spoke by telephone in October 2006, when a pastor in my area conference was ill. Her congregation was standing by to assist, to pray and offer support. She called me, the conference minister, her friend. Always compassionate, always practical, always following through.

I never heard Anne sing in the last years. Our lives were filled with talk more than song. But I am forever grateful for Anne, the alto who supported many melodies with her voice. The church has lost a wonderful pastor; the Mennonite church has lost an extraordinary leader, and I have lost a friend.

Somewhere, probably, she's singing, and that song will turn my mourning into joy.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen is conference minister for Western District Conference and lives in Newton, Kan.



One little woman makes

Kommaly Chanthavong is savior of her people.

by Polly W. Swafford

Dreamstime.com

Born in an impoverished village in the northeastern mountains of Laos, one of the poorest nations in the world, Kommaly Chanthavong grew up to be the savior of her people.

She says, "God doesn't want us to despair or give up. He gives us energy, passion and the fruit for our labors. He even gives me colors to dye silk scarves by looking at the colors of the sunset and sunrise. He is my teacher."

This petite, unassuming woman has transformed life in the mountains by giving poor villagers a much needed source of income. She founded a cooperative for producing silk and teaching skills to raise silkworms, create natural dyes and weave traditional Laotian patterns.

When Chanthavong was a child, the war between Vietnam and France extended into Laos, a country landlocked by China, Thailand and Vietnam. Soldiers from both sides burned homes, and planes bombed her village, Muang Pern, forcing her family to hide in the forest.

In 1960, Chanthavong, then 13, dreamed of a better life for herself and all the villagers. She decided to flee Muang Pern, hoping to find safety and freedom in Vientiane, the capital. Alone, she trekked barefoot through the jungle for two days, praying, "Let me be safe."

Then she came upon a regiment of Laotian soldiers, which proved to be an answer to her prayer. Her uncle was one of the soldiers, and together they traveled 250 kilometers south to Vientiane. Once there, her uncle adopted her. Now she was safe and could again go to school.

"Back in Mother's home," her daughter Souphaphone says, "the villagers called her lazy because she wanted to learn to read and write, instead of doing housework. Education was limited to about a third-grade level."

In Vientiane, Chanthavong finished secondary studies in 1964 and entered nursing training. She studied hard and sold cloth she wove to help support her adopted family. Later she met Noulieme Chanthavong, and they were married in 1972.

Meanwhile, battles in the North intensified. Her father was killed in the war, leaving her mother and two sisters without livelihood.

"At this point," Chanthavong says, "I left nursing and started my own import-export business to help support my mother and sisters. I arranged to sell Laotian products and import goods from Thailand for Lao farmers to buy."

When the war ended, Communists took over Vientiane. Many families, including her adopted family, fled Laos. The government closed the borders and ended communication with other countries.

"Finding food was next to impossible," she says. "Jobs were scarce. Because of the shortage of petrol, I walked to remote areas to trade my goods for something to eat. Sometimes I crossed the Mekhong River on a raft to Thailand to find food and sneaked a visit with my adopted family in a refugee camp. Thai soldiers imprisoned me for a while. I was never afraid, but this was a very hard time, and I fell into a deep depression."

In 1976, Kommaly and Noulieme Chanthavong settled in Phon Tong village, near Vientiane, where many displaced villagers from northern Laos were living.

"I wanted to help the villagers," Chanthavong says, "so I invited 10 women to our home to do their weaving together. Every day the women came to weave, have lunch and encourage each other. With their support, I began to recover from my depression."

a big difference

Courtesy of Ten Thousand Villages

'I wanted to help the villagers': Kommaly Chanthavong

She also created recipes for making soy sauce and fish sauce, which sold quickly at the "morning market" and in government shops. The Lao government gave her special permission to travel to Thailand to obtain needed ingredients.

Meanwhile, Chanthavong and Noulieme had three children. Her responsibilities were mounting, but she continued to give time and effort to reinforce her women's group, helping them "earn a dependable income."

Souphaphone Chanthavong says, "My mother's goal to help her people remained strong. In 1980, when the communist government was encouraging cooperatives, she formed the Phon Tong Handicraft Cooperative. The following year, the Department of Industry in Vientiane Municipality sent her to Vietnam for management training and afterward to Moscow for marketing training."

The cooperative provides free raw materials and lessons to preserve the art of traditional Laotian weaving. Previously, weavers had to buy materials from suppliers in neighboring countries who charged high prices and didn't always deliver the goods. Each year the cooperative divides profits among the government, shareholders and operating funds. The shareholders are the producers—more than 450 weavers, basket makers and wood carvers from 35 villages.

This system earned government approval. In 1989, the cooperative began working with Ten Thousand Villages, a fair-trade organization with stores in the United States and Canada. Kommaly serves as director of the cooperative; Noulieme manages its finances.

Last year, Chanthavong and her daughter demonstrated spinning silk from silkworm cocoons and weaving techniques at the Ten Thousand Villages store in Overland Park, Kan. First she boiled cocoons in a big pot to loosen the single, delicate fiber. Taking filaments from 60 cocoons, she spun them into a single silk thread on a small, hand-operated spinning machine, then wove a scarf on a miniature loom.

During the demonstration, Souphaphone said, "Mother remembered how the poverty-stricken villagers in northeastern Laos scratched out a living as subsistence farmers. She convinced some of them to change their methods of farming—to raise cows for milk and manure for fertilizer and to plant mulberry saplings. The saplings would produce leaves for organic fertilizer and food for growing silk worms, fruit for dyes and eating, and bark for tea."

In 1995, Kommaly Chanthavong started a silk farm in Xiengkhuang Province, experimenting to find the most efficient method of silk production. Today it produces silk for scarves and wall hangings for export to Ten Thousand Villages and other fair-trade organizations. Ninety percent of the farmers sell their silkworm cocoons back to the cooperative. Kommaly's dream has come true—the silk production utilizes local resources and supports the villagers.

She says, "My passion remains the same today. As I consider these accomplishments, I thank God for everyone who has helped along the way and the success that God has given in my work."

Polly W. Swafford lives in Prairie Village, Kan.

Awards received

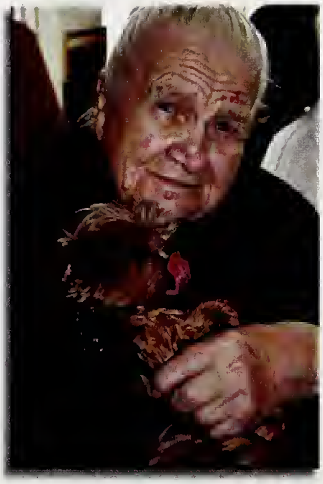
1964—Scholarship to study nursing in Thailand

2002—UNESCO Best Artist Award for scarf design

2003, 2004 and 2005—Additional international awards for designs

2005—Nomination for Nobel Peace Prize (jointly with 1,000 other women)

2006—International Fair Trade Association Certification of Phon Tong Cooperative



'A beautiful day': Mary with a puppy

Giving thanks

Holy moments emerge during a mother's la

by Leona Dueck Penner

In the summer of 2005, after a Sunday morning worship service celebrating the lives of Mary and Martha of Bethany, we concluded by singing the hymn "Will you let me be your servant?" As we sang the fourth verse, my husband turned to me and whispered, "That's what you're doing with your mother these days—laughing and weeping as you help to see her journey [with Alzheimer's] through."

I nodded, my throat thickening as I reread the words:

"I will weep when you are weeping,
when you laugh I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through."

A few days later, the words of that hymn came to mind again as I drove to Bethesda Place, the nursing home in Steinbach where my 90-year-old mother, Mary, slowly approached her "journey's end," her usually joyful spirit encumbered by confusion, sadness and fear, some of the trademarks of this debilitating disease.

Will she be weeping or laughing today? I wondered, hoping I would catch her on "a good day," knowing that maybe she needed me even more when she was having a bad time.

But then, I mused, maybe that's just what a friend calls my "Mennonites serve until you die" work ethic, which assumes that it's more important to be present with people in the midst of suffering than during times of celebration. Perhaps she needed me to laugh with her as much as she needed me to cry with her, I reassured myself.

As it turned out, I knew right away that my mother was having a good day when I entered the common room of Prairie Rose wing that afternoon. Her eyes lit up as soon as she saw me, though she couldn't quite recall my name. And she was brimming with happy stories involving "cats" and "a big commotion" that had happened that day.

"I'd like to have a cat," she enthused as I wheeled her to her room. "But who would look after it when I'm away?" (The latter, a reference to the many imaginary jaunts on which her mind took her.)

"Yeah," I said. "That might be a problem."

"Still," she persisted, her face glowing. "Some of the other ladies have cats; they give so much 'Gesaltschaft' [companionship]."

"Well," I said, not knowing how to respond to her longing looks. "You did have a cat long ago. Remember Sparky?"

Her eyes went blank.

(She doesn't remember, and I shouldn't have asked her a question, I thought, berating myself inwardly. Questions always make her feel insecure and inadequate because she simply can't remember or is afraid of giving the wrong answer.)

"Also, you've got that nice toy cat that Laurence and Sue sent you from British Columbia," I hurried on, searching her room for the plush creature as I spoke.

"Here it is, such a soft and furry thing," I said, rubbing the silky toy against her cheek.

But I could tell by her eyes that it wasn't enough.

Just then, Jodi, the recreation coordinator, walked by Mom's room holding a small furry body in her hands.

So there was substance to my mother's cat and commotion story after all, I thought as I hurried after the young woman, asking if perhaps my mother could hold this little cat (which turned out to be a seven-week-old pup) for a moment .

And Jodi gladly brought the little dog to her.

"Mary, you love this little puppy, don't you?" she said as she handed the tiny trembling

Her usually joyful spirit was encumbered by confusion, sadness and fear, some of the trademarks of this debilitating disease.

at journey's end

ays while suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

creature to my mother, whose face simply shone with joy. "You can hold him a little longer now while he sleeps."

And for the next half hour, that little dog slept on my mother's breast while she stroked his little body gently (just like she'd done when cradling all her 11 children in years past) and murmured something about God's love for babies and other tiny things.

Later, after the puppy was gone, we happily shared coffee and butter tarts, followed by a lovely little walkabout in her beloved courtyard garden. Then, as we said our farewells (without tears this time), she called after me: "Leona, Thanks for a beautiful, beautiful day."

And I responded with special gladness because she'd remembered my name, "Thank you, too, dear Mother, for this time of laughter and celebration."

Epilogue: October 2007. My mother's earthly journey ended the previous spring, when she died of pneumonia unexpectedly about a year and a half after the visit I described above. By the time of her death, her speech had become much more garbled, she needed assistance with meals, and she required a Hoya lift to make wheelchair transitions, which frightened her.

Yet what remains with me now is not the sadness and suffering of that stage of Mom's journey but the Christ-light that continued to shine through her as she

- repeatedly expressed thanks to all who assisted her;
- delighted in small things, such as the pet visitation program and the beauty of bright colors;
- deliberately evoked laughter with funny facial expressions and her newfound skill of whistling whenever something especially pleased her.

Also, as a family we cherished those elusive moments when the veil of confusion lifted and Mom was suddenly able to articulate the innermost thoughts of her heart with words that blessed and inspired many.

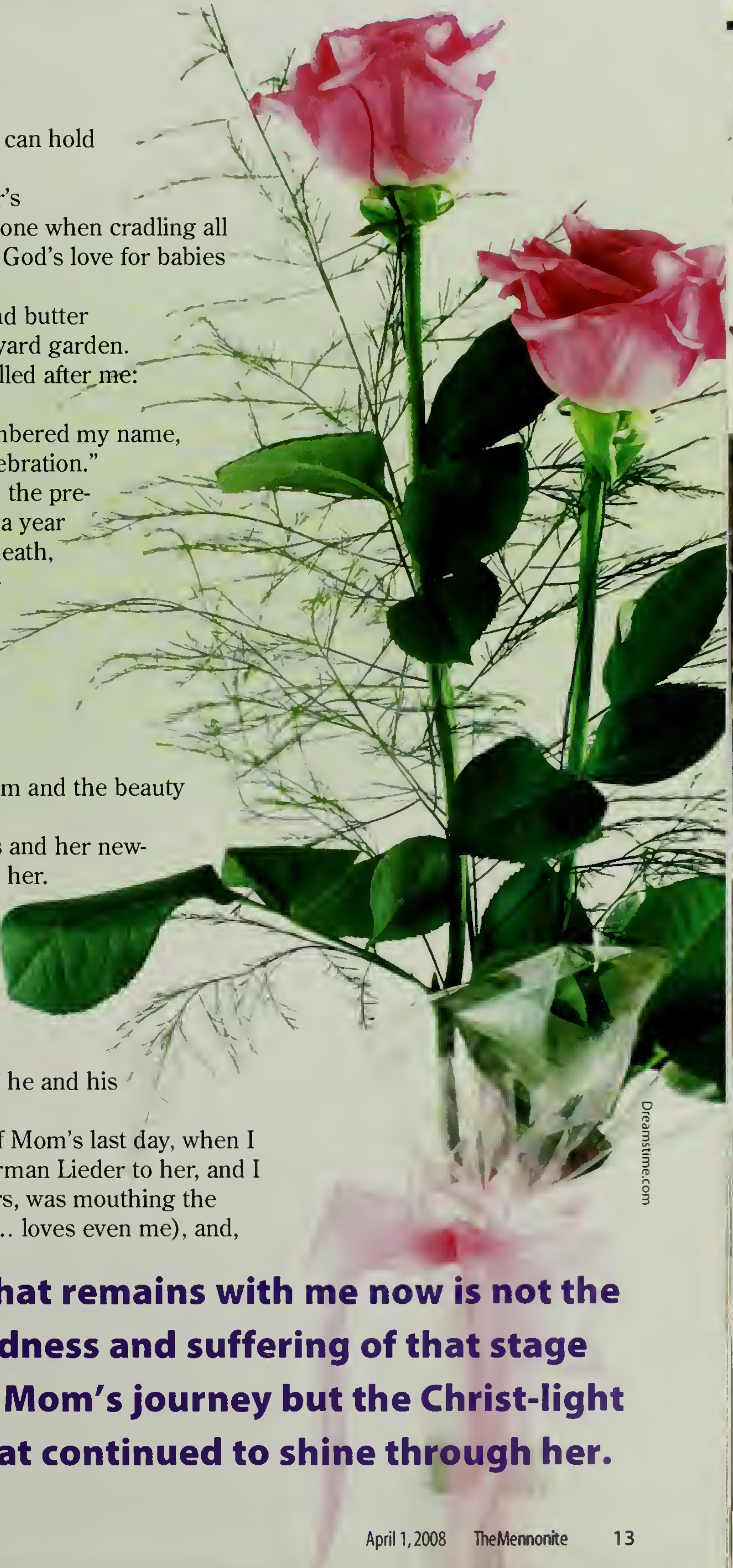
For example, she told a grandson just before his marriage that he was "wise and kind, something that is important in a husband," and that when she was "safely in the arms of Jesus," he and his new wife would "carry on God's plan in the world."

And for me there was "joy beyond words" on the dawning of Mom's last day, when I sat at her bedside, holding her hands while quietly singing German Lieder to her, and I suddenly noticed that she, who had been in a coma for 24 hours, was mouthing the words, "Gott ist die Liebe … Er liebt auch mich" (God is love … loves even me), and, "Ich weiss einen Strom" (I know of a beautiful stream) along with me.

Those were precious "last words" made more poignant because we sang them together just a few hours before Mom's earthly journey ended.

For that holy moment I will always give thanks.

Leona Dueck Penner is a member of Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.



Dreamstime.com

What remains with me now is not the sadness and suffering of that stage of Mom's journey but the Christ-light that continued to shine through her.

A trip to the grave of a martyred grandfather

The grandfather I never knew

by Ted Fransen

He was the grandfather I never knew, kept alive only through my Oma's stories. More than six decades after he was executed for his political and religious beliefs by Stalin, I was the first in the family to stand at the place marking his death.

I am a Canadian, born in Ontario, living in Manitoba, working in Winnipeg, but last summer I stood on the Russian soil once called home by my grandparents and mother and mourned my grandfather. My pilgrimage took me to Kiev and Zaporozhe, Ukraine, as well as Orel, Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia.

My grandfather Jacob A. Rempel was executed on Sept. 11, 1941, but for decades no one knew his fate. His wife kept hoping that someday her husband would join her and their children in Canada. The family had barely escaped the terror of the Soviet Union as post-World War II refugees hoped and prayed their father, a political prisoner, would rejoin them. His life story has been retold in *Hope Is Our Deliverance* (Rempel & Enns, 2005).

Throughout my early childhood in the 1960s, I heard whispered voices talking about the International Red Cross, a possible sighting in Siberia. My older brother explained it to me as my Oma's desperate hope that our grandfather was still alive.

I could almost imagine my grandfather lying there and forgiving the soldiers who had taken his life, then whispering the name of his beloved wife, my Oma.

Hardly a week went by in which my mother did not say something about her father. He had been a great father as well as a community and church leader. He had risen from being a stable boy to a university professor, from dreamer to martyr. My mother showed me the letters her father had written from the Siberian Gulag and from his prison cell in Orel, Russia.

Shortly after my wife and I got married, her grandmother told her own account of being attacked and raped by marauding bandits during the Russian Revolution. In despair, my wife's grandmother dragged herself to the edge of a deep well and contemplated suicide. The intervention of her pastor—my grandfather, who happened to come across her whimpering body—prevented her from making that choice. The encounter at the well between our respective grandparents certainly had some incredible long-term effects.

These connections to the memories of my grandfather were forever seared into my consciousness.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 came new openness and access to official records. We finally learned the fate of my grandfather. He was one of 157 political prisoners held in Orel, Russia, 400 kilometers south of Moscow. On Sept. 11, 1941, they were loaded onto trucks and taken to the Medwedewskij Woods, 10 kilometers east of the city, and shot. According to official Russian records, my grandfather was prisoner #123. The bodies were left in the woods in a shallow mass grave.

About three years ago, I discovered that a monument had been erected at the spot in the Medwedewskij Woods near the city of Orel by family members of some of the 157.

On July 18, 2007, at 4:30 a.m. local time, I stepped off the train in Orel, Russia, and was greeted by Tatjana, my guide and interpreter. She welcomed my family and me to Orel and asked the driver to head out of town to the monument.

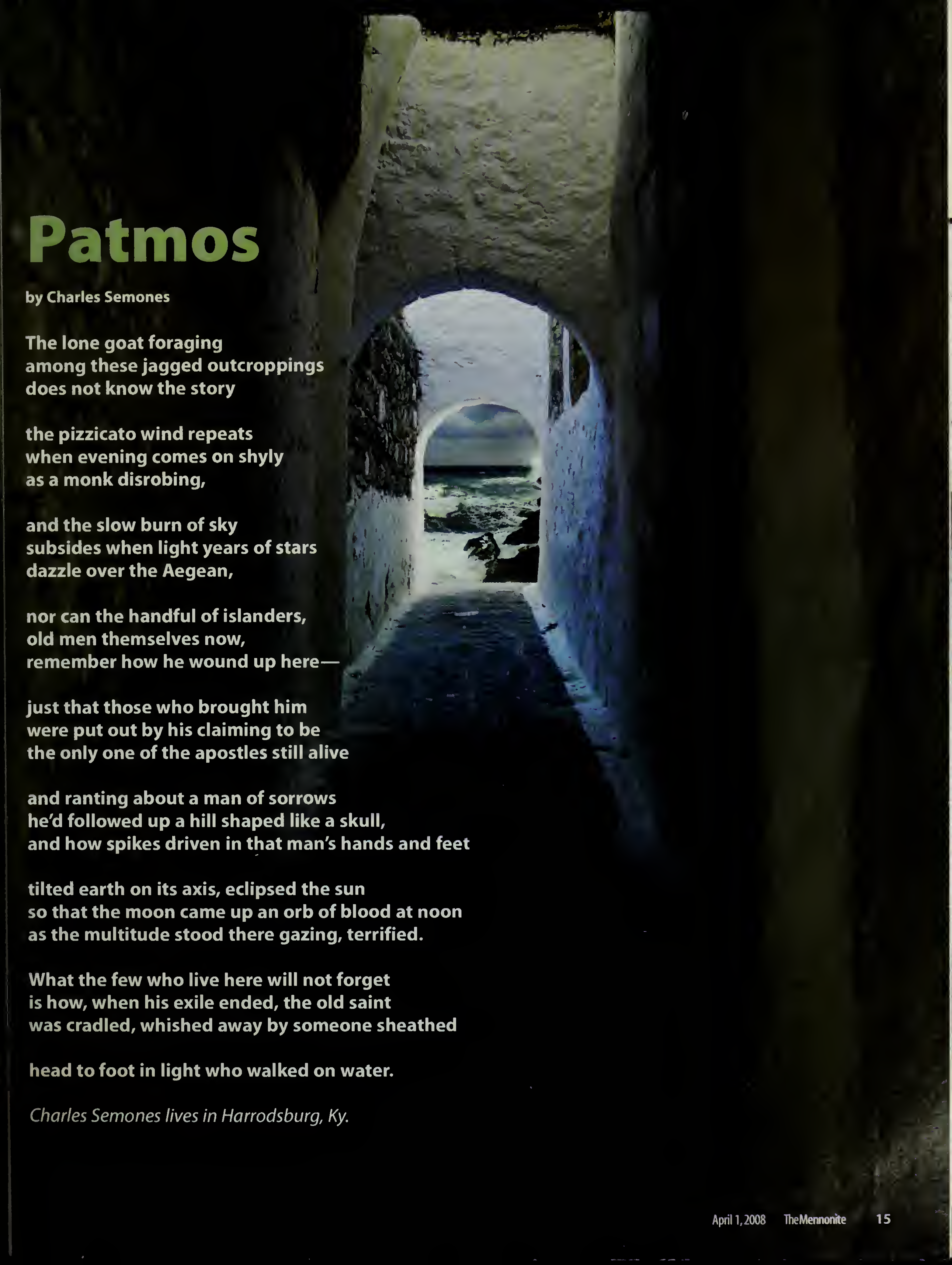
I approached the monument with reverence. I placed the flowers I had purchased at the public market at 5:30 a.m. at the base of the monument. I read Psalm 13 and Psalm 23 out loud and asked my family to join me in saying the Lord's Prayer. The whole scene felt surreal. We wandered into the woods and tried to imagine the groans and anguished cries from the victims on this Sept 11 tragedy. I could almost imagine my grandfather lying there and forgiving the soldiers who had taken his life, then whispering the name of his beloved wife, my Oma.

We then drove in silence and headed for the austere stone building—vintage 19th century. I walked around the outside perimeter of the jail that had been my grandfather's prison from 1936 to 1941. In his letters he had written about looking out of his cell into the woods. I imagined his eyes peering out at the world between the bars.

This was a once-in-lifetime experience for me. Over 60 years had passed since my grandfather perished as a martyr. Throughout those years I never gave up hope that someday my own pilgrimage would reconnect these sacred memories with the present. Standing at the monument in Orel was unbelievable. Being the first descendent of my grandfather, a martyr, made it an incredible journey for me.

Ted Fransen is a member of Morden (Man.) Mennonite Church.

Dreamstime.com



Patmos

by Charles Semones

The lone goat foraging
among these jagged outcroppings
does not know the story

the pizzicato wind repeats
when evening comes on shyly
as a monk disrobing,

and the slow burn of sky
subsides when light years of stars
dazzle over the Aegean,

nor can the handful of islanders,
old men themselves now,
remember how he wound up here—

just that those who brought him
were put out by his claiming to be
the only one of the apostles still alive

and ranting about a man of sorrows
he'd followed up a hill shaped like a skull,
and how spikes driven in that man's hands and feet

tilted earth on its axis, eclipsed the sun
so that the moon came up an orb of blood at noon
as the multitude stood there gazing, terrified.

What the few who live here will not forget
is how, when his exile ended, the old saint
was cradled, whished away by someone sheathed

head to foot in light who walked on water.

Charles Semones lives in Harrodsburg, Ky.

Someone wise

by David A. Shank

Is it time for a Mennonite ombuds-team?

In the dynamics of the early church at Corinth, failures were appearing in what was not yet a clear system. People who had been made just before God through faith in the Messiah Jesus, were accusing each other of injustices and taking their cases to civil courts presided by ungodly judges who were typically guilty of rendering decisions according to human law—and the highest bidder.

So the Apostle Paul intervened by letter (1 Corinthians 6) with his own critique of what was going on. For him, the Christian believers—as far as rendering justice is concerned—were much more highly qualified than such judges, or even the angels. Paul understands Christians to have an understanding of justice—through the cross—that these others do not share. Hence Christians are more qualified to judge the things of this life, even though these are trivial compared to God's work in Christ that makes them just. "Is it possible that there is no one among you wise enough to judge disputes between believers?" asked Paul. "Appoint judges," he wrote. Those justified by faith in Christ's grace and compassion through the cross are to render such justice among themselves, where the message of the cross is at the heart of things. In that context, he could even ask in the light of the cross of Jesus, "Why not rather be wronged?"

This early congregational context knew nothing of intercongregational situations or of today's broad-ranging institutions, organized in the world, with governmental or other secular requirements for employers with employees. For Mennonites, this has been a slow evolution, under many different initiatives, starting with primary schools, missions, children's homes, homes for the aged, colleges, publishing houses, hospitals, high schools, service for peace, psychiatric care, care of the socially challenged, programs of social and economic development. They have often started along the familial pattern of brothers and sisters in Christ working together, then evolved into a more or less typical corporation operated by Christians.

It's a remarkable networking system of the Mennonite church projected into action, extended and structured through many autonomous but often interrelated institutions—all working at fulfilling necessary Christian vocations through this particular system. Often it has meant employing non-Mennonites, even non-Christians. It is Mennonite-initiated and organized, and—in some sense, in some contexts—more or less overseen through various church boards, yet it is not "the church" as such. It acts like a business, not the church. It runs like a corporation, not the church. Yet these are all spin-offs of "the church" in the world, for the sake of the world and the witness of the church and are often confused with the church, which is congregational, confessional and familial, with its own organizations, structures, disciplines, commissions, boards and patterns of interrelating congregations. Yet when injustice and unfairness are experienced in one of those multifarious institutions, it is perceived as coming from the church.

In the world there is hiring and development of staff and employees, with structural and financial hierarchies, varied institutional disciplines, competition for jobs, and contracts—with wages, vacations, sick leaves, dismissals, terminations and firings, insurance and retirement policies. Is this the church or parachurch? Are these the institutions of the church, church-inspired institutions or just church-related?

Inevitable misunderstandings, disputes and conflicts, clashes and disagreements arise between the institution as employer and the gifted or qualified employee about understandings, interpretations, applications, sanctions and rewards. The heavy, decisive weight of the Christian institution over against the defenseless, solitary individual without the solidarity of a labor union may create permanent, unresolved, leftover, dangling resentments and anger against the Mennonite church as experienced through this larger system. Some of these leftovers are found among people still within the church; others—with their families—are outside, looking in at what "the church" did to them.

Are there not among Mennonites such professional mediators, people trained in conflict resolution or specialized lawyers committed to our church's vision and understandings who could be officially designated Mennonite purveyors of com-

enough to judge

passionate justice in our current system? Such people in secular life who investigate complaints and mediate fair settlements, especially between aggrieved parties such as consumers or students and an institution or organization, are given the Swedish name Ombudsman—"a trusted agent of justice." When one's situation is seen as falling through the cracks of the system, one can always appeal to the Ombudsman; she is there because the system recognizes that by definition such situations happen and call for fair treatment. When the system fails, there is someone there to intervene.

In some circumstances this has already happened. But what about the possibility of, say, a permanent Mennonite Ombuds-Team (MOT) of three people designated officially to operate within our system with all its imperfections?

The suggestion raises two obvious questions: How would such a service be created? How would it work? Here is one possible scenario, among several. The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board could ask the Constituency Leaders Council to elect three people (each with more than half the CLC's affirmation) who would be named judges on MOT—the Mennonite Church USA's Mennonite Ombuds-Team.

How would it work? The Peace and Justice Support Network [PJSN] could organize and administer the services of MOT, determining patterns for relating appeals to MOT from individuals or institutions. Either among the latter would be free to submit appeals up to perhaps 20 years after the incident, and both would be committed beforehand—as a part of a larger Mennonite network—to accept the majority judgments of MOT. The emerging body of experience would be an important teacher and would help PJSN monitor emerging patterns of practice.

Let's look at a fictional illustration. A woman who is no longer a "practicing Mennonite" was dismissed 10 years ago by a Mennonite institution that claimed a lack of resources. Presumably for the same reasons, she was not given resources for a year's leave she had earned during more than 10 years of service, according to the institution's written policy when she was hired ["called by Christ"]. To survive, after dismissal, she was forced to use up her earned retirement funds. With time and aging, the nonexistence of those funds now threatens her. Since the institution is now thriving, why should she not be given retrospectively the resources with interest for a year's earned leave that she never received 10 years ago? It would permit her to invest some equity for retirement. If MOT existed, she could take her case to MOT, and the case would be closed by designated Mennonite judges. Now she just has serious questions about Mennonite Church USA's system and wonders about its calls for peace and justice.

We seek justice and peace in Christ within our system, then to share out of that experience in the world.

The Russian Communist regime, it was reported, was so certain of its system of justice for all that it actually punished Christian congregations that cared spontaneously for needy people who "fell between the cracks" in the system. Such caring exposed the failure of the system.

As part of four generations of family relationships with "Mennonite institutions" I don't think our evolved system has come to this, though the claims for its intentions are high, yet murmurs of anger and resentment do emerge now and then. Such murmurs call for the recognition of failures and the need for a permanent, three-person council of wise and just judges—a Mennonite Ombuds-Team available to provide a wholesome settlement and a just peace between people and institutions left at odds? We seek justice and peace in Christ within our system, then to share out of that experience in the world. MOT would be a permanent service organ of Mennonite Church USA that officially acknowledges failures in our midst and seeks to overcome them with justice and peace.

David A. Shank is a member of Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Goshen, Ind.

Income tax redirection and spiritual healing

Stanley Bohn is a retired Mennonite pastor and a member of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

The National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Council is proposing minor civil disobedience for April 15. As a symbolic action to defund the war, NWTRCC is urging thousands to withhold part of their income tax, even $1, and redirect it to humanitarian needs underfunded because of the war. Advice on how to do this is available on its Web site, www.nwtrcc.org

Will this action make Congress and the Bush administration change their funding priorities? Unlikely, even if millions took part in this effort. After all, war fuels our economy, is useful in getting national unity and political support, and it focuses on the evil of others, allowing us to raise our self-esteem. As Chris Hedges wrote in his book *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*, war provides us with purpose and a civil religion.

What happens to us: For some Christians, the motive for participating in tax redirection may start as a protest against refugee making, the slaughter of people as collateral damage, torture of prisoners, creating mentally damaged veterans, ballooning war debt, ruined international relations and other disastrous consequences. But when we take a stand for our Christian convictions, something else may happen.

We gain an understanding of Jesus' way of being lumped with criminals when choosing the community-building, caring, enemy-loving life at the heart of the universe. We realize that Jesus did not live or teach a religion guided by what is respectable, safe, stress-free or that waits for a consensus. Jesus calls us to a life that is unpredictable and vulnerable.

Tax redirection is not a criterion of who is a "real Christian" but is more accepting life as a gift, being what we are here for, living what we see in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. When the IRS makes us pay a small percentage more than our lawful tax, we can experience what we believe is more important than money, and the hold money has on us is reduced.

Living this kind of trust in the Jesus way helps keep serious Christians from attempting to be pure and withdraw from life's realities. It keeps us engaged in current issues and with those proposing different goals. We are engaged, however, in the kind of peace Christians should expect when choosing an alternative way to conquer evil.

The risk of taking a stand regardless of consequences brings an unexpected peace. It is not a peace that makes us feel protected, free of fears or satisfied with ourselves. It is a peace from knowing one is on a venture of trusting in the universe-guiding reality we see in Christ. It is an empowering peace given us when we offer ourselves to the one who gave us this life, trusting God for the outcome. It is an empowerment that keeps us open rather than defensive and having to shut out the desperate cries of others. It is an alternative to a consumer-oriented Christianity that brings an unintended transformation that makes us vulnerable and powerful at the same time.

Possibilities after April 15: There is no telling if or how God might use the April 15 tax-redirection event. Consequences may occur that we never thought of, including what powers or gifts might be released in ourselves.

We should not expect the government to inform us how many participated. The media may not be free to report it, even if it knew. If the amount we withheld and diverted is seen by the IRS as worth taking action against us, we will likely receive threatening letters and finally have those funds confiscated along with a penalty.

Yet significant tax redirection can mean some humanitarian agencies will get more financial support, and starving people will be fed. Maybe some legislators will hear the conscience dilemma of many taxpayers and join other co-sponsors of HR 1921, the Freedom of Religion Peace Tax Fund, which would make legal the redirection of taxes by conscientious objectors to war. And maybe a few thousand redirectors will discover we are less bound by the expectations of others and are freer than we thought we could be.

Most important, we may learn that choosing risky ways of living for others, even civil disobedience, can bring spiritual healing. We won't defund the war, but we can be more confident of the Power that overcomes our fears and by God's grace enables us to be the humans God intended us to be. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Evangelism in a multireligious society**—Myron S. Augsburger

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

Electronics threaten camps, traditions

Campers want Internet connections and cell-phone service, ignore nature.

When Corbin Graber, director of Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, Divide, Colo., learned of a youth group's frustration with the camp's rule that electronics (iPods, cell phones and more) are not permitted at camp, he thought about what makes a camp experience distinct.

Mennonite camp staff discussed these types of challenges and named where they find hope at the Mennonite Camping Association's binational conference March 17-20 at Spruce Lake Retreat in Canadensis, Pa.; 129 representatives from 30 camps attended the conference.

Mennonite Camping Association (MCA) has 50 member camps; it promotes Christian camping among Anabaptist/Mennonite conferences and congregations in Canada and the United States.

Keynote speaker Bob Kobielush, president of Christian Camp and Conference Association, spoke on the theme "Breaking Through Walls" in four sessions related to four areas: a camp's situation, vision, commission and ministry.

"I came to bring good news and be a realist," Kobielush said in the opening session.

Kobielush's association with 1,000 camps, including half the MCA membership, has "never had such tough financial times," he said. His camps have more beds, but they are emptier. The camps also listed "lack of appreciation by the church" in their top five perceived threats.

MCA's experience: Graber, who also serves as president of MCA, said the numbers for MCA camps are a "mixed bag." For example, the camp he directs, Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, had a good year last year.

Lanny Millette, director of Camp Hebron, Halifax, Pa., reports the following general trends in Mennonite camps: a decline in usage, increased expectation for luxury (air conditioning, wireless Internet connections and cell-phone service) and a decreased use of nature. Millette said church groups often come to camp but stay indoors and do not have meetings outside or hike.

But it's not an "all bad picture," he said, as Mennonite camps have a loyal following and committed volunteers.

More choices for families: The amount of activity choices available for families and children could affect the decline in usage of camps. Graber knew of some churches that had to choose between attending the San José 2007 convention and attending snow camp. Many families choose between sports camps and church camp.

Millette said that when faced with this choice, families should try to do both.

Anna Groff

Camp staff members Cheryl Landis, Brandon Bergey and Malachi Bontrager learn a new camp game at the Mennonite Camping Association convention March 17-20.

"They get good stuff at sports camps," Millette said. "They get life-changing stuff at camp."

Not meeting at camps: When Mennonite church groups or other meetings do not choose to meet at Mennonite camps, Graber said, logistics are often the issue.

"Should we expect people to drive farther and spend more money to see us?" Graber asked.

However, Millette said that when these church groups use hotels, all their money goes to the for-profit hotel. When groups use camps, the money goes back into the ministry.

"That's socially responsible spending," he said.

Millette said the partnership between the church and camp is important. We can provide that "come-away place" to look at ourselves in a new light and then back to the church for follow-up, he said.

Turning back to nature: In his workshop based on the book by Richard Louv, "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder," Millette noted three observations: Free play is replaced by electronic games, intimacy with nature is replaced by knowledge of nature, and solitude and silence are not valued.

Guidelines, such as no electronics, make the camp experience unique, Graber said.

"The more unique we are," he said, "that will be our strength." Camp location, an Anabaptist perspective and the sincerity of staff are distinctive characteristics of Mennonite camps.

It is MCA's challenge to turn people back to nature, Millette said. "We don't know how much [electronics] rule our lives," he said.—*Anna Groff*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

Executive Board wants radical changes for Mennonite Church USA structures

In a meeting March 16-17 with the executive directors and board chairs of Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite Mission Network, MMA and Mennonite Publishing Network (Mennonite Church USA's churchwide agencies), the moderator and moderator-elect of Mennonite Church USA shared the Executive Board's vision for a reformed and unified churchwide organization.

Moderator Sharon Waltner of Parker, S.D., and moderator-elect Ed Diller of Cincinnati, Ohio, expressed the board's concerns to the group, which also included Mennonite Church USA executive director Jim Schrag and associate executive director Ron Byler. At its Feb. 8-9 meeting in San Antonio, Texas, the Executive Board (EB) said the denomination's vision and call "is not adequately supported by our present relationships, behaviors and organization."

Our future depends on our ability to grasp new relationships and behaviors that support community, equip our members and offer a clear, focused, unified identity and witness for Christ in the world.—Sharon Waltner

To support the vision of Mennonite Church USA, the EB is calling for a unified churchwide communication and identity system and a simple, cohesive funding system.

The EB is also suggesting that an additional person be added to the Executive Leadership staff with the goal of assisting the executive director to ensure churchwide ministries practice good stewardship by reducing duplication and increasing organizational effectiveness at meeting congregational needs.

Finally, the EB believes the unity of purpose needed to adequately support the vision requires the development of one integrated board of directors for the denomination that would replace the individual boards for each agency.

"Too often, we appear scattered organizationally and motivated by narrow purposes and segmented missions that do not equip our members and congregations for ministry," Waltner said. "Our future depends on our ability to grasp new relationships and behaviors that support community, equip our members and offer a clear, focused, unified identity and witness for Christ in the world."

Waltner said the EB came to these conclusions in two closed sessions without staff present at its San Antonio meeting (see Feb. 19, page 22). The board agreed it was important to share and discuss this direction first with agency executives and board chairs before public discussion.

Area conference and constituency group leaders will be invited into the conversation when the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) meets March 31-April 2 in Mt. Pleasant, Pa.

The EB agreed at its September 2007 meeting—its first of the biennium—in Newton, Kan., to lift up Vision: Healing and Hope and its missional church priorities as a framework for future board direction. The board said it would lead the church in responding to the Church Member Profile findings and evaluate churchwide systems by how effectively they supported congregations.

Also at its September meeting, the EB agreed it would accept its leadership position and authority in Mennonite Church USA. Waltner and Diller said this guiding principle was stirred by delegate responses at San José 2007 calling for the EB to take a more prominent role in vision and leadership for the whole of the denomination.

Waltner and Diller said the denomination's six-year review, delegate table group responses from San José 2007, feedback from CLC, a 2006 CLC task force report, a 2005 funding study and the Church Member Profile 2006 all indicate a need for improving the ability of churchwide ministries to function effectively, to relate to each other and support area conferences and congregations as they seek to join God's work in the world.

Waltner said that while the Executive Board has stated its desired outcomes, it wants to engage the other parts of the church in developing a plan for how to achieve them. She said the board wants the best thinking from across the church on how best to reorganize the denomination and its agencies in a way that best meets congregational needs.

One churchwide communication and identity system: The EB sees redundancy—such as multiple news services, uncoordinated congregational mailings and competing organizational identities—in the area of communication as a hindrance to the denomination's combined capacity to enable Mennonite Church USA congregations and members to strengthen their witness. At present, each of the agencies and Executive Leadership coordinates some joint communication, though the

Calls for one system of communication, funding, one integrated board; feedback from delegates at San José, constituency leaders is cited as reason.

majority of each staff's work is separate from the work of other staff. To remedy the duplication, the EB calls for one churchwide communication and identity system headed by and in the denominational center.

Area conferences will need to help shape and participate in a new churchwide communication system. The board wants the system to include *The Mennonite* so that all communication from church entities to congregations and their members are integrated.

A simple and unified funding system: Mennonite Church USA has multiple funding systems that are complicated and lead to what appears to be competition among agencies, colleges, area conferences and related groups for funds. Each agency is responsible for raising its own funds independent of the others. Executive Leadership does not actively raise funds from individuals but relies on contributions from area conferences and agencies.

A funding study of Mennonite Church USA household giving completed in 2005 by Advancement Associates indicated that Mennonite Church USA is a small denomination with too many organizations competing with each other for the same funds.

For board members, this raises a concern about whether existing church structures are sustainable—or relevant—for the future of the denomination.

The board calls for a simple, unified funding system that respects designations from donors while providing funding where it's most needed in the denomination. The funding system, like the communication system, will be headed by and in the denominational center.

One integrated board of directors: At present, each agency and *The Mennonite* has its own board of directors that are responsible to the EB, which acts on behalf of the Delegate Assembly, the denomination's decision-making body, when it is not in session.

The EB is calling for an integrated board of directors for the agencies, Executive Leadership and *The Mennonite* that would make space for meaningful, connective voices from agencies and conferences. The shape of a new integrated board will be the subject of discussion between now and the all-boards meeting June 19-21 in Columbus, Ohio, Waltner said.

Next steps: After the CLC joins the conversation at its March 31-April 2 meeting in Mt. Pleasant, Pa., the EB's Executive Committee will meet to evaluate the discussions with agencies and conferences. The committee also will prepare for discussion with other churchwide boards June 19-21. Boards participating in that meeting include the Executive Board, Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite Mission Network, MMA, Mennonite Publishing Network and *The Mennonite*. This meeting was set more than a year ago and will be the first gathering of all Mennonite Church USA boards of directors since its inception in 2001.

> **The strength of our vision, supported by clearer identity and stronger behaviors of community might surprise us in its capacity to invite increased support for all parts of our mission.**—Ed Diller

Immediately following the all-boards meeting in Columbus, the EB will have time to evaluate next steps. Those steps will be reported as they are discerned.

Diller shared his optimism about the future: "The strength of our vision, supported by clearer identity and stronger behaviors of community might surprise us in its capacity to invite increased support for all parts of our mission."—*Marathana Prothro for Mennonite Church USA*

The Amish & the Media
Diane Zimmerman Umble
& David L. Weaver-Zercher

The Amish and the Media
edited by Diane Zimmerman Umble and David L. Weaver-Zercher

The essays in this book not only focus on the Amish as subjects in mainstream media—news, movies, TV—but also view them as producers and consumers of media themselves. Despite their separatist tendencies, the Old Order Amish use their own media networks to sustain Amish culture. Chapters examine the influence of Amish-produced newspapers and books, along with the role of informal spokespeople in Old Order communities.

$35.00 hardcover

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS
1-800-537-5487 • www.press.jhu.edu

Woman sees ‘man in white’ in dream

Mission workers help Bualean see that it was Jesus who came to help her.

Pat Houmphan

Pat Houmphan and his wife, Rad, are Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in northeastern Thailand. This story of Bualean Bootbangyang (right) was co-authored by Pat and their son, Phillip Houmphan.

Bualean Bootbangyang’s troubled life was transformed by Jesus, the man in white who appeared in her dreams.

Bootbangyang was a widow, furious at her late husband, who infected her with HIV/AIDS before dying, setting her and their daughter apart from the other villagers. Alone and frustrated, she first met Christ in a dream and found hope after a meeting with mission workers.

Bootbangyang was born and raised in Nongchit, a village about three miles east of Borabu, Thailand. She grew up in poverty and was forced to drop out of school after grade six to help her parents with farm work. As a teenager, she was sexually abused by her half-brother. She told her mother about the problem, but her mother sided with Bootbangyang’s half brother.

Deprived of parental love and with a strong desire to escape her circumstances, Bootbangyang moved to Bangkok at the age of 18. Several years later, Bootbangyang married. With a man to support her, the future looked bright, and she dreamed of raising a family of her own. In 1995, the couple moved back to Nongchit. Their daughter was born later that year.

Unfortunately for Bootbangyang, after just five years of marriage, her husband became promiscuous. In 2001, he was infected with HIV/AIDS. He died two years later without ever having told Bootbangyang about his condition.

Shortly after his death, she discovered the truth and learned that he had passed the virus on to her. Bootbangyang was angry at her husband and angry with life. She worried about what would happen to her daughter if she were to die. Out of fear, fellow villagers distanced themselves from her, leaving Bualean feeling ashamed. After three years of grieving, Bootbangyang dreamed of a man dressed in white who spoke of a “way out,” but she did not understand what it meant.

Pat and Rad Houmphan, workers in Borabu through Mennonite Mission Network and Mennonite Church Canada Witness, met Bootbangyang two months later while visiting Nongchit village to preach the gospel. When Bootbangyang heard of the way out provided through Jesus Christ, she realized that Jesus was the man in her dreams. Shortly afterward, Bootbangyang decided to follow Jesus.

Today, Bootbangyang is a different person. She has learned to accept her problems and can now be seen laughing and smiling in services at the Living Water Church. Although she is still poor, she is generous with what she does have. She says she no longer fears death or what her death might mean for her daughter; God will take care of it all.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Local people serving the insurance needs of Mennonites and Brethren in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

For information about home, auto, farm, church, or business insurance find a Goodville agent near you at goodville.com or 1-800-448-4622.

Goodville
Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

The Great Awakening: Reviving Faith and Politics in a Post-Religious Right America by Jim Wallis (HarperOne, 2008, $25.95) shows how Americans are reinserting themselves into the political process and reclaiming government as a force for good.

The Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Contextual Ministry, edited by Craig Van Gelder (Eerdmans, 2007, $20), offers clarifying insights into the ongoing dialogue about congregations and their contexts, addressing the question, What does it really mean to be church?

Wrestling With Angels: Conversations in Modern Theology by Rowan Williams, edited by Mike Higton (Eerdmans, 2007, $28), gathers writings by Williams—many now out of print or difficult to obtain—spanning the years 1980-2000. It focuses on his engagement with a range of modern theologians and philosophers—Vladimir Lossky, Hegel, Wittgenstein, Bonhoeffer, Balthasar, Barth, Maurice Wiles, Gillian Rose, Marilyn McCord Adams and more.

William Wilberforce: A Biography by Stephen Tomkins (Eerdmans, 2007, $18) transports the reader back to a dramatic age of conflict and upheaval, the late 18th century in Great Britain, when Wilberforce worked to outlaw the slave trade.

Remember Us: Letters from Stalin's Gulag (1930-37) by Ruth Derksen Siemens (Pandora Press, 2007, $39 Cdn.) presents 131 letters from one family who were prisoners in the Gulag. In the entire collection, 463 letters tell the story of other families and individuals caught in Stalin's snare. For many families in Canada and the United States, this is the only connection they have to loved ones who perished there. For a few fortunate others, many who came to Canada to settle, they are a reminder of dark and frightening times in their past.

Martyr on the Amazon: The Life of Sister Dorothy Stang by Roseanne Murphy (Orbis Books, 2007, $18) tells the story of the American nun who worked with poor farmers in the Brazilian Amazon in their struggles against rapacious developers and was murdered in 2005.

Thoughts of a Blind Begger: Reflections from a Journey to God by Gerald Thomas Straub (Orbis Books, 2007, $18) includes poetic meditations by an author, photographer and documentary filmmaker who works on behalf of the world's poorest. The book includes his photos of poor people.

Eastern Wisdom for Western Minds by Victor M. Parachin and Jason K. Dy (Orbis Books, 2007, $16) combines pithy stories and lessons on a variety of themes to teach wisdom from Eastern religions.

Liberating Jonah: Forming an Ethics of Reconciliation by Miguel A. De La Torre (Orbis Books, 2007, $20) describes the significant role the underrepresented and oppressed can play as instruments of reconciliation today.

A Moral Climate: The Ethics of Global Warming by Michael S. Northcott (Orbis Books, 2007, $20) is a thorough look at the ethical and moral issues raised by the biggest thing human beings have ever done: rearrange the workings of the earth's climate system.

Great Peacemakers: True Stories from Around the World by Ken Beller and Heather Chase (LTS Press, 2007, $21.95) tells true-life stories of 20 peacemakers from around the world, including famous leaders as well as lesser-known individuals who are making a positive difference in the world.

TheMennonite
when you can't pray
EDITORIAL
It's not easier with age

Subscribe TOGETHER and SAVE

If you would enjoy terrific savings on *The Mennonite*, now is the time to form a **group subscription**. With our tiered-pricing system, groups of at least five members save more than $6 per year per person compared with the individual subscription rate.

Start your subscription today:

- Log on to our Web site at **www.TheMennonite.org**,
- Send an email to **Subscriptions@themennonite.org**,
- Or call Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498**

Jamaica conference celebrates 50 years

Leaders from Virginia Mennonite Missions, Conference attend March event.

The Prince of Peace

Virginia Mennonite leaders present a Menno Simons fraktur to Jamaica Mennonite Church leaders. From left: Douglas Senior, Steve Carpenter, Liston Aiken and Loren Horst

With the theme "We have come this far by faith," the Jamaica Mennonite Church (JMC) celebrated 50 years of conference meetings March 7-9 in Kingston, Jamaica. Former missionaries, church members, Mennonite Central Committee personnel and Virginia Mennonite Missions and Conference representatives joined in celebrating.

The three-day conference and celebration began with a welcome reception on March 7. Jamaica Mennonite Church president Liston Aiken, administrative director Douglas Senior and members of the council of management greeted guests from various places in the United States, mainly Virginia, New York and Florida.

In 1954, D.H. and Annie Loewen from Manitoba answered God's call to go to Jamaica to spread the gospel and met Simeon Walters, who with his family became the first members of the church. The Loewens returned to Canada due to health concerns. Warren and Erma Metzler took their family to Jamaica and served in various areas for 11 years. Erma Metzler Schnobel attended the celebration.

Twelve congregations were established in various locations on the island. Jamaican pastors serve in each one. The last missionary pastor left in 1995.

On March 8, congregational reports interspersed with lively singing and prayer informed the delegates and the visiting guests of activities and goals for each church. On March 9, former missionaries told stories of their work in Jamaica, recalling how God had led them into new communities—sometimes over rough roads. Former members described their encounter with Mennonite missionaries, the various methods of baptism and the guidelines for lifestyle issues.

On March 10, buses filled with church members from across the island arrived at the large auditorium in a local high school. The morning hours were filled with praise songs, intercessory prayer, greetings from fraternal delegates from the Mennonite Church of Trinidad and Tobago and from Beryl Jantzi, moderator of Virginia Mennonite Conference. A sermon by Myron Augsburger challenged the audience of 700 people to "live by the principles of the kingdom, to transform life by believing. ... Reach out to other Caribbean areas, including Cuba. We don't know what tomorrow will bring, but may it bear fruit for the kingdom."

In the afternoon session, president Liston Aiken instructed the gathered church to "constantly understand that we are a peace people ... peacemaking is not an addendum but is part of being God's child," he said.

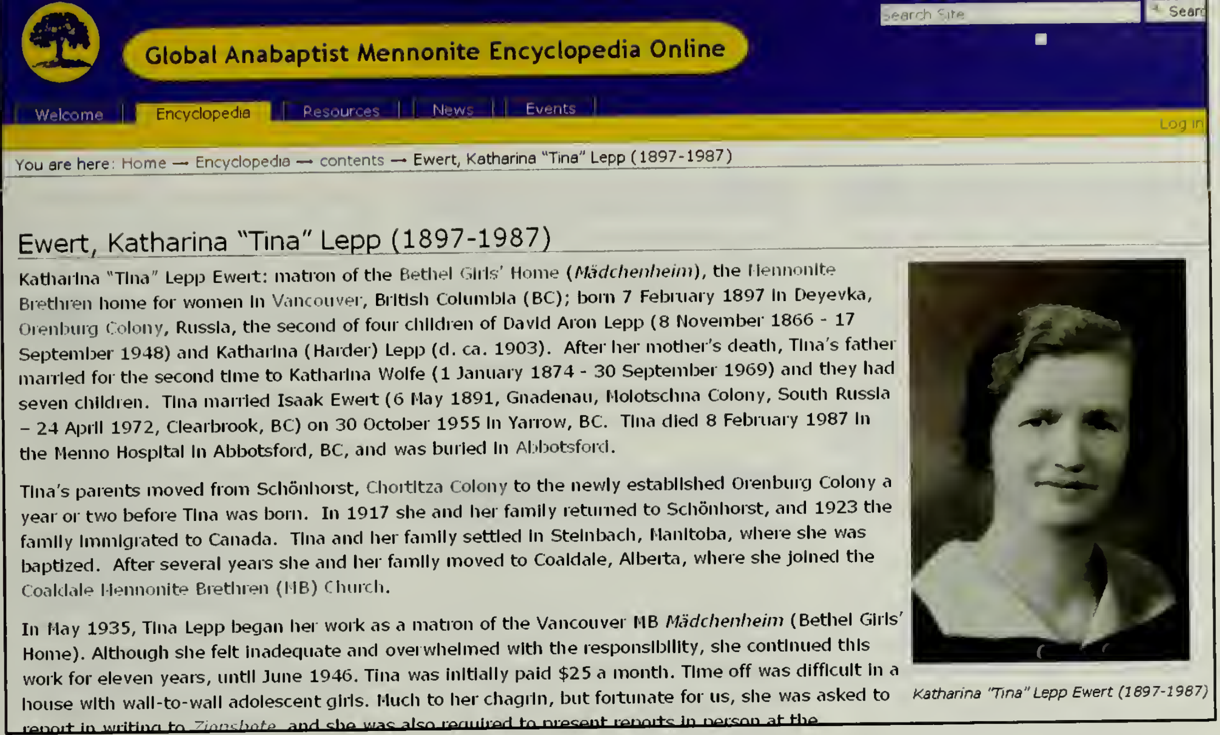
Aiken urged members to make peace with the brothers and sisters in the congregation, to share Jesus with people others have shunned and to be people of prayer because "peacemaking is connected to our connection with God."

Virginia Mennonite Missions has related closely to Jamaica since the 1950s; its current role is to listen to the vision JMC expresses and assist where possible with personnel and funds. Jamaica Mennonite Conference seeks closer connections with Virginia Mennonite Conference.—*Gloria Lehman of Virginia Mennonite Missions*

Physicians - Dentists - Nurses
Snow Mountain Ranch
Winter Park, Colorado

CONVENTION 2008
June 19 to 22
Mennonite Medical and Nurses Associations

For Brochure–Registration, check:
www.mennmed.org,
or call: 540-433-5059


Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online
Search Site
Search
Welcome
Encyclopedia
Resources
News
Events
Log in

You are here: Home → Encyclopedia → contents → Ewert, Katharina "Tina" Lepp (1897-1987)

Ewert, Katharina "Tina" Lepp (1897-1987)

Katharina "Tina" Lepp Ewert: matron of the Bethel Girls' Home (*Mädchenheim*), the Mennonite Brethren home for women in Vancouver, British Columbia (BC); born 7 February 1897 in Deyevka, Orenburg Colony, Russia, the second of four children of David Aron Lepp (8 November 1866 - 17 September 1948) and Katharina (Harder) Lepp (d. ca. 1903). After her mother's death, Tina's father married for the second time to Katharina Wolfe (1 January 1874 - 30 September 1969) and they had seven children. Tina married Isaak Ewert (6 May 1891, Gnadenau, Molotschna Colony, South Russia – 24 April 1972, Clearbrook, BC) on 30 October 1955 in Yarrow, BC. Tina died 8 February 1987 in the Menno Hospital in Abbotsford, BC, and was buried in Abbotsford.

Tina's parents moved from Schönhorst, Chortitza Colony to the newly established Orenburg Colony a year or two before Tina was born. In 1917 she and her family returned to Schönhorst, and 1923 the family immigrated to Canada. Tina and her family settled in Steinbach, Manitoba, where she was baptized. After several years she and her family moved to Coaldale, Alberta, where she joined the Coaldale Mennonite Brethren (MB) Church.

In May 1935, Tina Lepp began her work as a matron of the Vancouver MB *Mädchenheim* (Bethel Girls' Home). Although she felt inadequate and overwhelmed with the responsibility, she continued this work for eleven years, until June 1946. Tina was initially paid $25 a month. Time off was difficult in a house with wall-to-wall adolescent girls. Much to her chagrin, but fortunate for us, she was asked to report in writing to *Zionsbote*, and she was also required to present reports in person at the

Katharina "Tina" Lepp Ewert (1897-1987)

An article on Katharina "Tina" Lepp Ewert (left) was posted on GAMEO's Web site on March 12.

Lepp item is 10,000th posted on Web site

GAMEO, established 10 years ago, getting Mennonite Encyclopedia *online*

On March 12, Richard Thiessen of Abbotsford, B.C., assistant managing editor of the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online posted the 10,000th article on GAMEO's Web site (www.gameo.org). The article was on Katharina "Tina" Lepp Ewert, longtime matron of the Mennonite Brethren Madchenheim, or girls' home, in Vancouver (see above).

The entry joined others on topics ranging from A-B-C books, a collection of German-language religious readings, to Zwolse Vereniging, a Dutch Mennonite conference.

GAMEO was born nearly 10 years ago as the Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia Online when the Mennonite Historical Society began posting a database of Canadian congregations as well as Canadian-related articles from the five-volume Mennonite Encyclopedia.

Shortly afterward, *Mennonite Encyclopedia* publisher Herald Press granted permission to add non-Canadian articles, and in 2006 the project expanded to include U.S. representatives and volunteers.

Today GAMEO is supported by the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee, Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite World Conference.

Having reached the 10,000-article mark, attention is now focused on getting the rest of the print version of *Mennonite Encyclopedia* online. About one-fourth of the encyclopedia's 4,666 printed pages are left, GAMEO managing editor Sam Steiner estimates, and they could be done by the end of 2008. But that doesn't mean the work will end. While posting and, as possible, updating existing articles, new ones, such as on Ewert, are being written.

"As long as there are active Mennonites in the world, there will always be something to add," says Steiner.

Steiner, Thiessen and the rest of the GAMEO editors and writers are all volunteers. Steiner and Thiessen have overseen the preparation and addition of an average of 15 articles a day to the Web site, which daily draws about 1,400 visitors.—*Rich Preheim for Mennonite World Conference*

Specializing in web development
and customized software
Ten Thousand Villages || Learn about fair trade, find unique gift ideas & purchase
http://www.tenthousandvillages.com/
TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES
SHOP
GIFT IDEAS
COLLECTIONS
GIFT REGISTRY
ARTISANS
FAIR TRADE
STORES & FESTIVALS
Home › Shop › Plant & Garden
LIGHTSKY
www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

WORKERS

Ewert, Linda, was ordained as associate pastor at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., on March 8.

Harader, Joanna, was ordained as pastor at Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan., on March 7.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bowman, Caleb Isaac, Jan. 3, to Jonathan and Beth Witmer Bowman, Harrisonburg, Va,

Broughton, Kendall Lea, Nov. 24, 2007, to Scott and Stephanie Starke Broughton, Chesterfield, Va.

Cummings, Kalea Joy, Jan. 26, to Chris Cummings and Megan Miller, Madison, Wisc.

Fazekas, Tyler James, born Feb. 12, received for adoption on Feb. 15 by John and Diane Plank Fazekas, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Hartzler, Andrew John, March 11, to Matthew and Jennifer Whitmer Hartzler, Massillon, Ohio

Kaufman, Elias Alvin, Feb. 18, to Mark Kaufman and Heather Wengerd, Minneapolis.

Lapp, Oliver Wayne, Feb. 29, to David Lapp and Amy Hochstetler, Philadelphia.

Miller, Gavin Roy, March 7, to Jim and Monica Short, Archbold, Ohio.

Moyer, Laura Rose, Oct. 3, 2007, to Vernon and Christina Brendle Moyer, Chesterfield, Va.,

Nofziger, Cason Loyal, Feb. 29, to Jon and Becky Stuckey Nofziger, Archbold, Ohio.

Powell, Justin Luke, Oct. 19, 2007, to Andy and Amanda Fretz Powell, Chesterfield, Va.

Ranck, Arthur and James Edward (twins), Oct. 5, 2007, to Jon and Jaime Carnahan Ranck, Richmond, Va.

Reeser, Mitchell Douglas Wyse, Feb. 29, to Scott and Angie Wyse Reeser, Madison, Wisc.

Reinford, Joshua Dean, Jan. 7, to Neil and Donna Harnish Reinford, Lancaster, Pa.

Reinford, Lana Eve, Feb. 28, to Joseph and Amy Derstine Reinford, Telford, Pa.

Sharp, Jack Andrew, March 5, to Andy and Amy Yoder Sharp, Hesston, Kan.

Yoder, Emilee Brooke, March 8, to Kurt and Ruby Hershberger Yoder, Wooster, Ohio.

MARRIAGES

Burkholder/Rychener: Michelle Burkholder, Archbold, Ohio, and Jason Rychener, Archbold, Feb. 23, in Sonoma, Calif.

Moyer/Howren: Sidney Moyer, Powhatan, Va., and Jennifer Howren, Glen Allen, Va., Sept. 29, 2007, at Third Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Va.

DEATHS

Alderfer, Durrell G., 75, Harleysville, Pa., died Feb. 26. Spouse: Margaret Landes Alderfer. Parents: Allen and Eva Godshall Alderfer. Children: Doreen Bender, Timothy, Daniel; eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 5 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Armstrong, Lloyd E., 84, Archbold, Ohio, died March 3. Spouse: Thelma Rufenacht Armstrong. Parents: Clifford "J.C." and Barbara Short Armstrong. Children: Larry, Joan Greene, Nancy Emens, Keith; eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 8 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Beals, Stella Geiser, 82, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Jan. 25. Spouse: J. Earl Beals (deceased). Parents: William F. and Clara Geiser. Funeral: Jan. 29 at Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Gearig, Mary L. Short, 99, Archbold, Ohio, died March 8..Spouse: Earl Gearig (deceased). Parents: Elmer and Mary Waldvogel Short. Funeral: March 12 at Short Funeral Home, Archbold.

Horst, Dorothy Byler, 87, Wooster, Ohio, died Feb. 25. Spouse: Chester Horst (deceased). Parents: Alvin and Nettie Siegly Byler. Children: Alvin, Laurel Horst, Janet Studer, Barb Underwood; nine grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 29 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Horst, Selina, 87, St. Jacobs, Ontario, died March 13 of an age-related illness. Parents: John and Mary Frey Horst. Funeral: March 16 at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

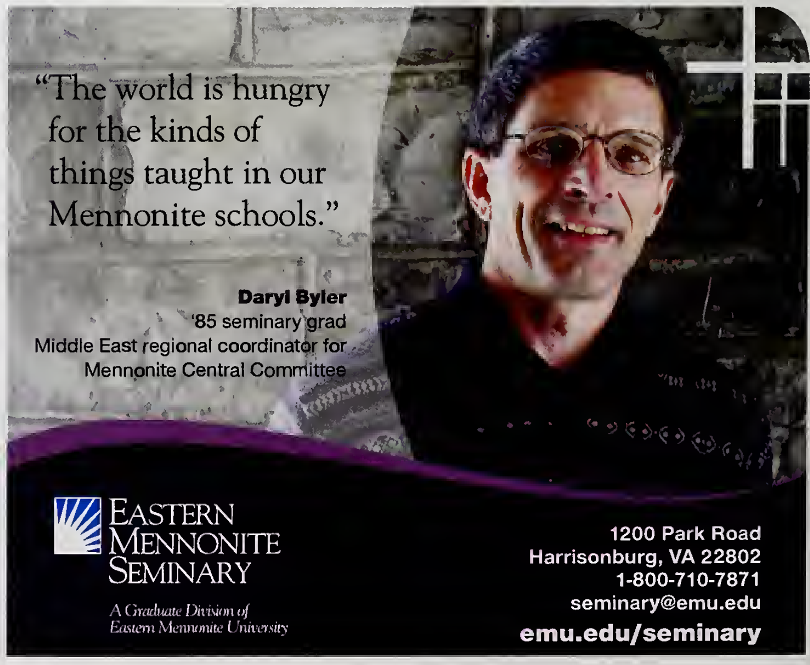
Hostetler, Eli, 78, Canton, Ohio, died March 5. Spouse: Betty Mae Stoll Hostetler. Parents: Jonas and Lizzie Hostetler. Children: Rick, Debbie Graber, Tammy Jarrett; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 10 at Arnold Funeral Home, Hartville, Ohio.

Kaufman, Clayton C., 84, Freeman, S.D., died Feb. 10. Funeral: Feb. 14 at Walter Funeral Home, Freeman.

Kehler, John, 87, Reedley Calif., died Feb. 24. Funeral: March 5 at Reedley Cemetery District.

King, Harley Elmer, 95, West Liberty, Ohio, died March 4. Spouse: Bertha L. Hartzler King. Parents: John R. and Nanne Zook King. Children: Kathleen Cunningham, David, Robert, Phillip, Marlin; 16 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 9 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Neufeld, Dan S., 87, Inman, Kan., died March 8. Spouse: Edna Neufeld (deceased). Parents: John and Eva Shierling Neufeld. Children: David, Waverly, Daneda Heppner, Stan, Cheryl Tellefson, Geanie Rusk; 11 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 12 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.


"The world is hungry for the kinds of things taught in our Mennonite schools."

Daryl Byler
'85 seminary grad
Middle East regional coordinator for
Mennonite Central Committee

EASTERN MENNONITE SEMINARY
A Graduate Division of Eastern Mennonite University

1200 Park Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
1-800-710-7871
seminary@emu.edu
emu.edu/seminary

Rupp, Ruth Ann, 65, Archbold, Ohio, died March 3. Parents: Eldon and Lydia Stuckey Rupp. Funeral: March 6 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Schlabach, Edna Bontrager, 91, Harrisonburg, Va., died Feb. 3 of pneumonia. Spouse: Levi Schlabach. Parents: John K. and Fannie Yoder Bontrager. Children: Albert, Retha Kinsinger, Doreen Roes, Martin, David, Nathan, Faythe DeLoreto; 20 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 8 at Alden Mennonite Church, Alden, N.Y.

Schrock, Dellis D., 76, Fargo, N.D., died Feb. 23 while volunteering with Presbyterian Disaster Service in Houma, La. Spouse: Twila Stoll Schrock. Parents: Lewis Rollin and Ada Marie Lehman Schrock. Children: Dee Albrecht, Joan Schrock-Woodward, Elizabeth Slabaugh, Michael (deceased); 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 27 at First Presbyterian Church, Fargo.

Schrock, Michael Lewis, 53, Minneapolis, Minn., died Feb. 25 as a result of a pedestrian/vehicle accident. Spouse: Erin Geiser. Parents: Dellis and Twila Stoll Schrock. Children: Atlee Geiser Schrock, Haven Geiser Schrock. Funeral: March 2 at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

Schweitzer, Lester, 81, Cairo, Neb., died Feb. 20. Spouse: Jeannine Oswald Schweitzer (deceased). Parents: John H. and Matilda Stutzman Schweitzer. Children: Don, Ron, Jon, Alan, Sharon Jarzynka, Rebecca Boone, Jewel Faeh; 23 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at First Baptist Church of Cairo.

Seitz, Grace Rittenhouse Heebner, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died Dec. 20, 2007. Spouse: Kenneth Leroy Seitz. Children: Kenneth, Delbert, David, Lois Kreider, Eunice Wenger, Frances Justice; nine grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Mt. Clinton Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Shetler, Lora L. Doolin, 72, Kalona, Iowa, died March 7 of complications of cancer. Spouse: Marland J. Shetler (deceased). Parents: Edward and Fannie Miller Doolin. Children: Cindy Litwiller, Carla Slaubaugh, Carol Gingerich, Jim; 14 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 11 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Stauffer, Harold S., 70, Lancaster, Pa., died Feb. 13. Spouse: Connie Heisey Stauffer. Parents: Norman E. and Grace S. Stauffer. Children: Cindy Mull; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 18 at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Stauffer, Joannita May Hirschy, 74, Wayland, Iowa, died March 14 following a short illness. Spouse: Dareld Stauffer. Parents: Joseph Christner and Magdalena Lydia Wagler Hirschy. Children: Michael, Ardell, Sonya Stauffer Kurtz, Jo Helmuth, Lieda Stauffer High; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: March 18 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Yoder, Harley D., 100, LaGrange, Ind., died March 7. Spouse: Letha Nancy Pletcher Yoder (deceased). Parents: Daniel V. and Fanny Yoder Yoder. Children: Robert Eugene, Dean Jay, Phyllis Maxine Weaver; 12 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren; five great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 12 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Yordy, Charity Evelyn Hooley, 85, Colorado Springs, Colo., died Feb. 19 of a massive stroke. Spouse: Gene Yordy. Parents: Vernon and Viola Ulrich Hooley. Children: Janet Lee, Kathleen Kaufman, Cheryl Erst; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 1 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Colorado Springs.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2008 TOURS

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND and WALES (June 25-July 7)
EXPLORING SWISS-GERMAN FAMILY ROOTS in EUROPE - EUROPEAN HERITAGE (August 25-September 7)
BUS TOUR to PENNSYLVANIA - SIGHT & SOUND (September 25-28)
CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)
TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)
FOLLOWING the STEPS of MOSES (November 2-14)
MWC GLOBAL CHURCH TOUR with LARRY & ELEANOR MILLER (November 10-24)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-19)
MWC #1 - BRAZIL, IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY (July 2-20)
MWC #2 - CHILE, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY (July 5-20)
MWC #3 - IGUAZU FALLS and PARAGUAY (July 9-20)
MWC #4 - IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY, PERU (July 10-24)
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and BOLIVIA (July 12-25)
MWC #6 - IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY, PERU (July 12-29)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (August 1-15)
MENNONITE STORY in POLAND (September 15-23)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (Oct. 24-Nov. 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (Jan. 3-13)
CHURCHES AND SAFARIS in KENYA and TANZANIA (February 9-20)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE TOUR (June 4-17)

2010 TOURS

CHECK WEB SITE FOR TOURS INCLUDING OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

TOURMAGINATION
DISCOVERY & FELLOWSHIP

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES

Ten Thousand Villages is Canada's largest retailer of unique, fairly traded products from around the world, with 50 locations across the country. We are starting our search for a new **Chief Executive Officer** to help carry forward our mission to provide vital, fair income to artisans in developing countries.

You will be highly skilled in managing people, finances and processes within a dynamic and complex retail environment. As our organization continues to experience rapid growth, we offer committed professionals the distinct opportunity to make a difference through Fair Trade.

As a program of Mennonite Central Committee, individuals considering employment with Ten Thousand Villages Canada should be able to exhibit a commitment to MCC's core values. This position is based out of New Hamburg, Ontario, Canada.

Interviews are likely to be held in late April – early May 2008.

For further information, contact Hazel Douglas at our recruitment consultants, Oxford HR, hdouglas@oxfordhr.co.uk and www.oxfordhr.co.uk

Staunton Mennonite Church, Staunton, Va., celebrates 50 years in 2008. Friends and former attendees are invited to an ***anniversary celebration***, May 18, stauntonmennonitechurch.net or kzendt@comcast.net.

Western Mennonite School, Salem Ore.; positions beginning August 2008.

High school social science teacher: Full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred with a major in social science. Licensed in or be able to be licensed in Oregon.

High school Spanish teacher. Full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred, with a major in Spanish. Licensed or be able to be licensed in Oregon. Application closing date for both the above positions: April 18. Contact Darrel Camp at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or dcamp@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Dorm leaders. 10-month, full-time position. Western seeks both male and female candidates to serve as dorm leaders for its high school dorm program. Experience working with youth preferred. Responsibilities include mentoring students, enforcing rules, planning and supervising activities. Candidates must be willing to work with students from other cultures, promote a positive Christ-centered community and be willing to work flexible hours. Applications accepted until positions filled. Contact Zig Derochowski at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or zderochowski@westernmennoniteschool.org.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Western Mennonite School, Salem Ore.; position beginning immediately. ***Bookkeeping assistant***. Part-time. This hourly position is responsible for accounts payable, check reconciliation, quarterlies and payroll. Will assist in general ledger, preparing budgets and other assistance as needed. Qualifications include three years bookkeeping with fund accounting experience; prefer a degree in accounting. Application closing date: April 18. Contact Pat Raush at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or praush@westernmennoniteschool.org. Western Mennonite School, established in 1945, offers grades 6-12 to local students and students from around the world. Located on 45 acres in Oregon's Willamette Valley, Western offers a strong academic and faith-building experience. Western seeks exceptional candidates with a heart for youth and sharing Christ.

Salem Mennonite Church, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alberta, (45 minutes Southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0; fax 780-662-0106; email salemchurch@live.ca.

Celebrate fitness! If you are 50 or older, participate in the sixth ***Mennonite Sports and Fitness Classic*** sponsored by MARP and MMA at Goshen College June 26-28. For a brochure, go to http://marp.mennonite.net/. Register soon and save $10.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS
FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED
THE CHILDREN OF
GOD. – MATTHEW 5:9

Goshen College's Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies program is built on decades of scholarship, a unique and nationally admired study-abroad program, a community that seeks diversity and Christ-centered core values rooted in the peace church tradition.

You might choose a major or a minor in a peace studies program, enhance another area of study wtih conflict mediation training, sign up for a semester of urban peacemaking study in Indianapolis, join the Pax or Eco-Pax student clubs and engage significant issues with guest speakers as well as your own professors and classmates.

We invite you to visit out welcoming campus to find out more – on your journey as a peacemaker.

GOSHEN
COLLEGE
WWW.GOSHEN.EDU/PEACE

Hesston College seeks applicants for a ***faculty position in English literature and composition***. Master's degree required; doctorate and teaching experience preferred. Qualifications include evidence of excellence in teaching, innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and to Mennonite Church USA. Responsibilities may include classroom teaching in composition; lower-level literature courses, such as British literature, American literature, Shakespeare, Introduction to Literature, and a genre course. Position available Aug. 15. Review of applications begins March 10 and continues until position is filled. To apply, send curriculum vitae, transcripts, application, and responses to essays (www.hesston.edu/employment) to Sandra Zerger, Academic Dean, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. EOE.

"Along the Way," a memoir about volunteering with MVS, by Joanne Murray. $12.99 plus shipping. To order 253-page paperback, visit www.masthof.com.

Additional positions open at **Western Mennonite School**:

Applications for the first two positions are open until Aug. 1, or until the position is filled. ***Food services director***: 10-month, full-time position, beginning August. Responsible for preparing daily menus and meals that adhere to state and federal guidelines for daily nutritional needs, managing the food services program, training and supervising food services staff and coordinating, as necessary, food for special occasions and functions. Must hold or be able to get an Oregon Food Handler's license. Contact Pat Rausch at 503-363-2000 or rausch@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Dorm director: 10-month, full-time position. Western seeks a candidate to serve as dorm director for its high school dorm program, beginning in August. Must be willing to work with and enjoy students from other cultures, promote a positive Christ-centered community and lead others by being a positive role model. Responsibilities include mentoring dorm staff and students, enforcing rules, planning and supervising activities. Management experience preferred. Contact Zig Derochowski at 503-363-2000 or zderochowski@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Applications for the following position is open until May 12 or until the position is filled.

Western seeks an ***alumni relations coordinator***, beginning in June, to help strengthen Western's alumni and friends network. Responsibilities include organizing fun and effective events and assisting in the development of communications, including the development and updating of Western's online community. The coordinator will work with a team to cultivate relationships among alumni and friends to encourage their involvement in the school's Christ-centered mission. The ideal candidate will be a positive, high-energy team leader with superior oral and written communication skills, proficient knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet and database software with ability to manage multiple projects and organize events. Western alum preferred. Contact Andrea Wall at 503-363-2000 or adwall@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Western Mennonite School, established in 1945, offers grades 6-12 to local students and students from around the world. Located on 45 acres in Oregon's Willamette Valley, Western offers a strong academic and faith-building experience. Western seeks exceptional candidates with a heart for youth and sharing Christ.

Hesston College seeks applicants for ***registrar***. Master's degree preferred. Qualifications include organizational skills, attention to detail, analytical mind, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and to Mennonite Church USA. Responsibilities include publishing and implementing academic policy, managing enrollment procedures and scheduling courses, maintaining institutional academic records, reporting enrollment and related data, working closely with faculty, admissions and other administrative offices, and assisting the academic dean. Position available July 1. Review of applications begins March 10 and continues until position is filled. To apply, send curriculum vitae, transcripts, application and responses to essays (www.hesston.edu/employment) to Sandra Zerger, Academic Dean, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. EOE

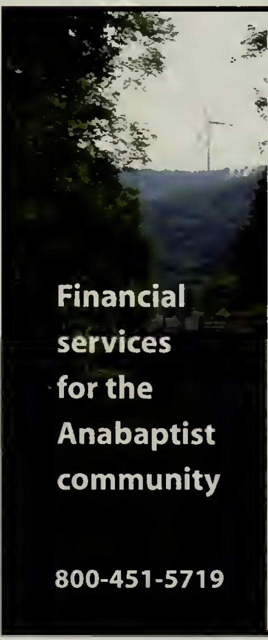
Southern Africa reunion for alumni of **Mennonite Central Committee** and mission agencies who served in Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe. July 25-27, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Contact Norma Johnson, 316-283-4018.

Lake Center Christian School in Hartville, Ohio, is seeking a ***full-time secondary principal*** (grades 7-12) beginning July 1. Lake Center enrolls 625 students K-12 with an additional administrative team of superintendent, assistant secondary principal and elementary principal. Qualified applicants will value teamwork, provide professional leadership in the areas of teacher supervision/evaluation and curriculum development, establish positive relationships with faculty/staff, students and parents, and have an understanding and acceptance of Mennonite (Anabaptist) faith perspectives. Resumés and inquiries should be directed to Matt McMullen, superintendent, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632; email: lccsmmcmullen@yahoo.com; fax: 330-877-2040; phone: 330-877-2049, ext. 511.

Chaplain at **Mennonite Village Continuing Care Retirement Community** in Albany, Ore. 600+ residents, 350 employees. Part of two-person chaplain department. Qualifications: seminary degree, ordained or eligible for ordination, board certification preferred or 1-4 units CPE. Full-time position includes up to .25 time as volunteer coordinator. Chaplain only .5 to .75 FTE. Competitive salary and benefits. To apply submit resumé and video or DVD of preaching and/or leading Bible study to Teresa Moser, Chaplaincy Services Director, Mennonite Village, 5353 Columbus St. SE, Albany, OR 97322.

Bethany Christian Schools (grades 6-12; enrollment 285) invites applications for 2008-09 for three teaching positions: ***6th-grade teacher*** (self-contained class), ***7 and 8 mathematics teacher***, and ***chemistry and physics teacher*** (high school). Applicants should hold or be qualified to obtain Indiana licensure. To apply, submit a resumé and letter of application to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499, phone: 574-534-2567; email: akdueck@bethanycs.net.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.



Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Youth Covenant Savings

To encourage thrift and fiscal responsibility, we pay higher rates on deposits of young people ages18 and under if the deposits are matched by a parent, grandparent, mentor, or other adult.

Youth Covenant Savings: *One more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Blood ties and kin-dom

Regina Shands Stoltzfus is a dissertation fellow at Goshen (Ind.) College during this academic year. She is working on a doctorate in theology and ethics at Chicago Theological Seminary.

On an April evening 14 years ago, I got a phone call telling me the news of my father's sudden, unexpected death; he had had a massive heart attack while on the road, alone. I was at home when the phone call came; that night we were hosting the youth group in our home. While I listened to the terrible news from a friend of the family, happy teenagers were romping in our back yard.

Although I was an adult when my father died, I had only known him for 10 years. Perhaps we are never ready to lose a parent, but this felt especially premature. My relationship with my father could be measured in several, distinct stages. For many years he was a mystery to me; I was aware of his existence but not a part of his life. I got to know him when I was a young adult, before I became a parent myself. I was apprehensive of him, shy. I didn't know if I wanted to like him, but I really wanted him to like me. Eventually we developed a relationship, and I grew to love him. I saw the ways I was like him. I knew why my mother loved him. I married and had children, and he loved my family.

The kindom is not a family that has to do with exclusive blood ties but with the ties of love, care and community.

Remembering my father and our relationship makes me think about the families we are born into, the ones that we create, the many shapes each of those categories falls into and whether the distinctions we make are as important as we think they are.

Because I was raised by a stepfather and lived with stepsiblings (although we never referred to each other in that way—we were and are simply family), I have always been suspicious, even dismissive of the importance of blood ties. Maybe I am too dismissive. It may be a defensive posture, a request for the acknowledgement of legitimacy for family structures that show evidence of fragility, brokenness.

Genealogies are important in the biblical narratives. In the context of ancient Israel's kinship structures, these genealogies show how the bloodlines flow, who belongs to whom and to what land families belonged. They tell us how individual families are shaped and how they operate, not as individual units unto themselves but as part of a larger context, part of a people. Along the way are disjunctures and fractures that we who have inherited these texts do well to pay attention to. Even in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus we are introduced to people—women—who fall outside what a proper family is supposed to be and do.

I find this comforting. There is room in the family of God for all kinds of families and all kinds of people. There is room in the family of God for families who don't fit the mold we hold up as perfection—God loves and uses those families. And perhaps through our human families—the families we see and live in—we are able to access the yet and not yet of the kingdom of God.

Or, shall we say, the kin-dom of God. Theologian Ada Maria Isasi Diaz notes that the metaphor of the kingdom of God is less than helpful in today's world because the reality the metaphor springs from—actual kingdoms—do not exist in the abundance they once did. For many of us, that point of reference does not have meaning. The concept of a kingdom also brings to mind an elitist, hierarchical structure that supports oppressive systems—not the inbreaking of a new thing that the prophets foretold and Jesus initiated. So she suggests the word kindom to move the political metaphor to a personal one, one we understand intimately. Further, the kindom is not a family that has to do with exclusive blood ties but with the ties of love, care and community. This is something all God's children are invited to, however we may come, in all our strength and joy, as well as in our brokenness and fragility.

On that lovely April evening 14 years ago, I heard the terrible news that someone I had to learn to love was no longer part of my earthly existence. I think about it every spring. I am grateful for the 10 years I had knowing my father, though it was much too short a time. But I am also grateful that my family, my kin, stretch far beyond those to whom I can include on a genealogical chart. On that night, I was well aware that it was another part of my family that stopped their play to embrace and comfort me. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

Two very different magazines
Two different purposes
Both need your support!

The Mennonite
spiritual roots in congregations
12 Growing with God through gardening
14 Christ is our center
18 Lead by listening
32 That they may be one

Everett J.Thomas, editor

OurFaith Digest
Fall/Winter 2007
Is there a new Modesty Movement?
No Heroic Measures: The Life and Death of Paul Steiner
I Remember the Bombs
Jep Hostetler on Friends
Crossword Puzzle, Children's Feature, and more!
ngelical Mennonite/Anabaptist Digest

Joe Miller, editor

As the official periodical for Mennonite Church USA, ***The Mennonite***:

- provides a forum for the voices in the church,
- promotes denominational ministries,
- offers an editorial voice distinct from these ministries,
- is published twice each month.

The Mennonite is a self-supporting entity made viable by subscription and advertising sales.

To subscribe:
1-800-790-2498

TheMennonite
www.themennonite.org

As a free, independent, grassroots publication for the Mennonite/Anabaptist church, ***OurFaith Digest***:

- seeks to reinforce the work of your church,
- tells stories that nourish faith, family and missions,
- informs and inspires everyday life in Christ.

Published three times/year, ***OurFaith Digest*** is a self-supporting entity made viable though your donations.

To donate:
1-800-790-2498

OurFaith Digest
www.ourfaithdigest.org

***************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 879 15-DEC-09 66994 34 30
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

OurFaith Digest and *The Mennonite*

This month we begin a partnership with another magazine: *OurFaith Digest*. We are doing so because we believe this free digest published three times each year is important for many Mennonites both within and outside Mennonite Church USA.

OurFaith Digest (*OFD*) was started in 2000 in part as a reaction to *The Mennonite*. Given the unsettledness of the years leading up to the formation of Mennonite Church USA seven years ago, its founders wanted a magazine that was not controversial, did not focus on the birth pangs of this new denomination and provided only inspirational stories that helped build the faith of its readers.

To achieve these goals, *OFD* decided to print enough free copies for every mailbox in every church that wanted the magazine. The cost of producing the magazine was minimized by republishing what had been published elsewhere—often three or four articles from *The Mennonite*—and printed with the least expensive paper and process possible. The business plan called for advertisers and financial supporters to pay for the costs.

Last July, Joe Miller succeeded founder Eugene Souder as editor; Joe published one issue before the *OFD* board decided its business plan was no longer viable. On Jan. 28, they announced they would suspend publication.

We support this digest format that republishes a small library of inspiration from Anabaptist and Mennonite writers.

After a month of conversations and emails, our board agreed to give *OFD* a lease on life for three more issues—one year. Why?

Our staff and board of directors has received feedback that *The Mennonite*'s format, purposes and frequency are not attractive to some members of Mennonite Church USA. This feedback usually suggests that those of us who are more theologically conservative do not find enough to like in the content we publish in *The Mennonite*. We also have heard from some pastors who do not want to give newcomers, especially people new to the Mennonite faith, a subscription to *The Mennonite* immediately because some parts of it—especially letters to the editor—are too revealing about the things over which we squabble. *OFD* has attempted to be a solution, and our board decided to support this digest format that republishes a small library of inspiration from Anabaptist and Mennonite writers.

One magazine cannot be all things to all people. Through annual readers surveys, we know that roughly 90 percent of *The Mennonite*'s readers now are—or in the past were—leaders in their churches or conferences: from Sunday school teachers and elders to pastors. We will continue to be a "forum for the voices of Mennonite Church USA," even when some of those voices are critical or present differing points of view. We'll also continue to help build our denomination's identity.

But *OFD* is a different product.

"A church that reaches out so valiantly as Mennonites," says *OFD* editor Joe Miller, "needs a friendly, welcoming voice that inspires and talks about the basics. I don't think we want to 'niche' *OFD* into a beginner's publication cubby hole."

Why might *OFD* be successful now when it struggled in 2007? Joe offers two reasons: First, the administrative and publishing help provided by *The Mennonite*'s staff will make manageable his skeletal (.3 FTE) part-time job. Second, Joe contends that through this connection to Mennonite Church USA, *OFD* will have new credibility and some "standing" it did not have before.

We do not intend to subsidize the publication of *OurFaith Digest* beyond the staff time we contribute. If congregations that receive this "grassroots, Anabaptist magazine" value it, then we anticipate financial support will follow, and the magazine can continue. Our suggestion for congregations that want to see *OFD* continue: Send a contribution of 60 cents for each copy you receive.

The Mennonite and *OurFaith Digest* are two different magazines with two very different purposes. Both need your support. We hope that the next three issues of *OFD* are the first of many in this partnership. We will do what we can to make it happen.—*ejt*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

April 15, 2008

APR 15 20

evangelism

Page 8

12 Confessional evangelism

16 Gamaliel's God

18 And no tribe of Joseph

32 Some young adults stay, some go

Not proud but pleased, grateful and glad

Elaine Bryant is prayer network coordinator for Illinois Mennonite Conference.

A *Chicago Sun-Times* columnist, along with other print and electronic media people, discussed the word "proud" in regard to comments by Michele Obama and Cindy McCain.

For the columnist, Ms. Obama and Ms. McCain, as well others, including myself, it is suggested that the words pleased, grateful or glad better serve the nation's well-being. It is possible such words convey more accurately what the wives and the columnist intended.

While the words proud and pride have been used and accepted in regard to feelings about the accomplishments of people, groups and nations, "Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). Also, God did not even speak of being proud of Jesus, who was the "Beloved Son." Instead, at Jesus' baptism and in a mountaintop transfiguration vision, God was "well-pleased" with him. Might we—individually, nationally and ethnically—benefit more from heeding the words of the Lord Jesus than from acting and speaking pridefully? He said, "All who exalt themselves will be humbled" (Luke 18:14).

The well-being of this graced nation could be greatly enhanced by having more people—especially Christians—focusing on praying for candidates and citizens to be endowed with wisdom "from above" while manifesting attitudes of gratitude and gladness for God's graciously given cultural, ethnic and national identities. For candidates and their supporters to focus on what they have to offer and intend to promote rather than on self-exalting claims of entitlement and tearing down their opponents would be a cause for gratitude.

Such a focus could move the nation to a long-overdue demonstration of the intents of the Constitution's 13th, 14th, 15th and 19th amendments, plus the lofty proclamations about equality in the Declaration of Independence. That could also lead to increased turning from unjust and unrighteous behavior that produces recurring cycles of anger, cruelty, hatred and violence.

Is it possible that praying and saying no to pride and self-exaltation and yes to gratitude and gladness could help bring about such changes? If we were limited to human wisdom, resources and control, the answer would be no. Praise and thanks be unto the Lord God. We are not so limited. Based on scriptural pronouncements and principles the answer to the question is yes.

One familiar pronouncement is, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14). Another is, "What is impossible for mortals is possible for God" (Luke 18:27).

Finally, Paul wrote in Romans 15:4, "Whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through … the Scriptures might have hope." If we take the pronouncement seriously, there is reason for confident expectation (hope) that, if believers in Christ not only pray but cease behaving and thinking pridefully, then God will graciously forgive and heal our families, communities and nation.

Is that all that we would have to do? Probably not, but by depending on the promised presence, help and leading of the Spirit of Truth, we can trust that we will receive knowledge about what else needs to be done.

It is surely worth a try for healing change by praying and living in a way that says, "Down with pride and self-exaltation. Up with gratitude and gladness for God's grace."

TheMennonite

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Vol. 11, No. 8, April 15, 2008

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church USA

CONTENTS

APR 15 2008
AMBS Library

6

7

11

17

8 Evangelism in a multireligious society
Evangelism means sharing with love that respects the freedom, thought and decision of the other person.—*Myron S. Augsburger*

10 Can we embrace both peace and evangelism?
We have dichotomized Jesus' call to be people of peace and to share the Good News.—*Gay Brunt Miller*

12 Confessional evangelism
Showing up to give confessions, not take them—*Greg Albright*

14 Christ and the new atheism
The New Atheists present the church with an opportunity to assess its failings and refocus on priorities.—*Victor J. Sensenig*

16 Gamaliel's God
Christians, Jews and faith today—*Jeremy Garber*

19 CLC responds to Executive Board action
Conference leaders address gender balance and antiracism concerns.—*Gordon Houser*

20 Women in ministry trajectories continue
Zaerr Brenneman provides anecdotal evidence for trends in two surveys.—*Anna Groff*

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Not proud but pleased, grateful and glad—*Elaine Bryant*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking Out
And no tribe of Joseph—*James S. Lederach*

24 For the record

30 Mediaculture
Human Smoke, following Jesus, science—*Gordon Houser*

32 Editorial
Some young adults stay, some go—*Anna Groff*

Cover: Jerry L. Holsopple | Mennonite Mission Network

No conservative voices

My wife, Margaret, and I are informing you that we do not want to renew our subscription to *The Mennonite*. Each issue seems to have something we find troubling. Not the least is the March 18 issue containing the article written by Everett Thomas suggesting that God desires to worship human beings. Such a statement is both heretical and blasphemous.

The publications over the years have increasingly promoted liberal theological viewpoints to such an extent that one gets the impression an agenda is being pushed on readers. I can't recall the last time a conservative theological voice was expressed. It is troubling when basic Scriptural beliefs are undermined, and absolute truth is questioned. One can hardly take comfort that the views represented in *The Mennonite* may not be the views of mainstream Mennonite churches. If *The Mennonite* is really the "official publication of Mennonite Church USA," then our denomination appears to be going down the slippery slope of relative truth and the postmodern stance of toleration where anything goes.

The radical Anabaptists of the 16th century in their quest for truth sought to take Scripture seriously and follow the paths of Jesus. One is hard pressed to find the same today.—*Larry Umble, Richland, Pa.*

Responses to March 18 issue

While I do not want to detract from Everett Thomas' article "Agnus Dei: Lamb of God" (March 18), I want to point out that Isaac was not "Abraham's only begotten son." "Abraham, without a son, would die and leave no posterity," Thomas wrote. But Ishmael was Abraham's son and part of his household at the time of Isaac's birth and for some time afterward.

Midway through the article "Health Insurance Proposal to Be Tested" (March 18) we are told that "the health-care access team assumes pastors age 65 and older use Medicaid benefits." In fact, the benefits received by most people over 65 come through Medicare.

Medicaid benefits are only available to some low-income people, including children, pregnant women, and the blind, elderly and disabled, with benefits varying from state to state.—*Martha Yoder Maust, Indianapolis*

606, the Mennonite anthem

I enjoyed Anna Groff's article on the popular Mennonite hymn "606" (March 18), but I was puzzled and disappointed that nowhere in the article was "606" identified as hymn #118 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*—the standard hymnal that Mennonites have been using for over 15 years. My congregation sings #118 every third Sunday of every month. We love it. But about a third of the adults in my congregation would have no idea what "606" is, which means they would have no idea what hymn this article is referring to. One way to keep "606" from becoming a cultural idol for ethnic insiders is to stop using nomenclature that keeps out newcomers to the Mennonite Church.—*Ryan Ahlgrim, Indianapolis*

Associate editor's note: *Anna included that information, but it was excluded in the editing process. We apologize.*

Sunday school class uses discussion guide

Just to let you know that we sporadically use *The Mennonite* as a catalyst for discussion in the Comjoinus Sunday school class at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa. Sometimes I rely on the discussion guides on your Web site in getting my thoughts together. I do appreciate the efforts that are put into it.—*David Bontrager, Leola, Pa.*

Predecessor magazine 100 years old

Gospel Herald, one of the two publications that preceded *The Mennonite*, was first published 100 years ago, on April 4, 1908. The name was taken from *Herald of Truth*, begun by John F. Funk in 1864, and *Gospel Witness*, begun in 1905 in competition with Funk's publication.

The merger was in response to a call for the Mennonite Church to control its publication interests. As described by John A. Hostetler in *God Uses Ink* (Herald Press, 1958), Funk had developed an extensive publishing program on behalf of the church, but younger leaders determined it was time for a change.—*Daniel Hertzler, Scottdale, Pa.*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

I tend more to: (55 votes)

- ○ live out my faith (51%)
- ○ talk about my faith (5%)
- ○ both (42%)
- ○ Neither (2%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

IN THIS ISSUE

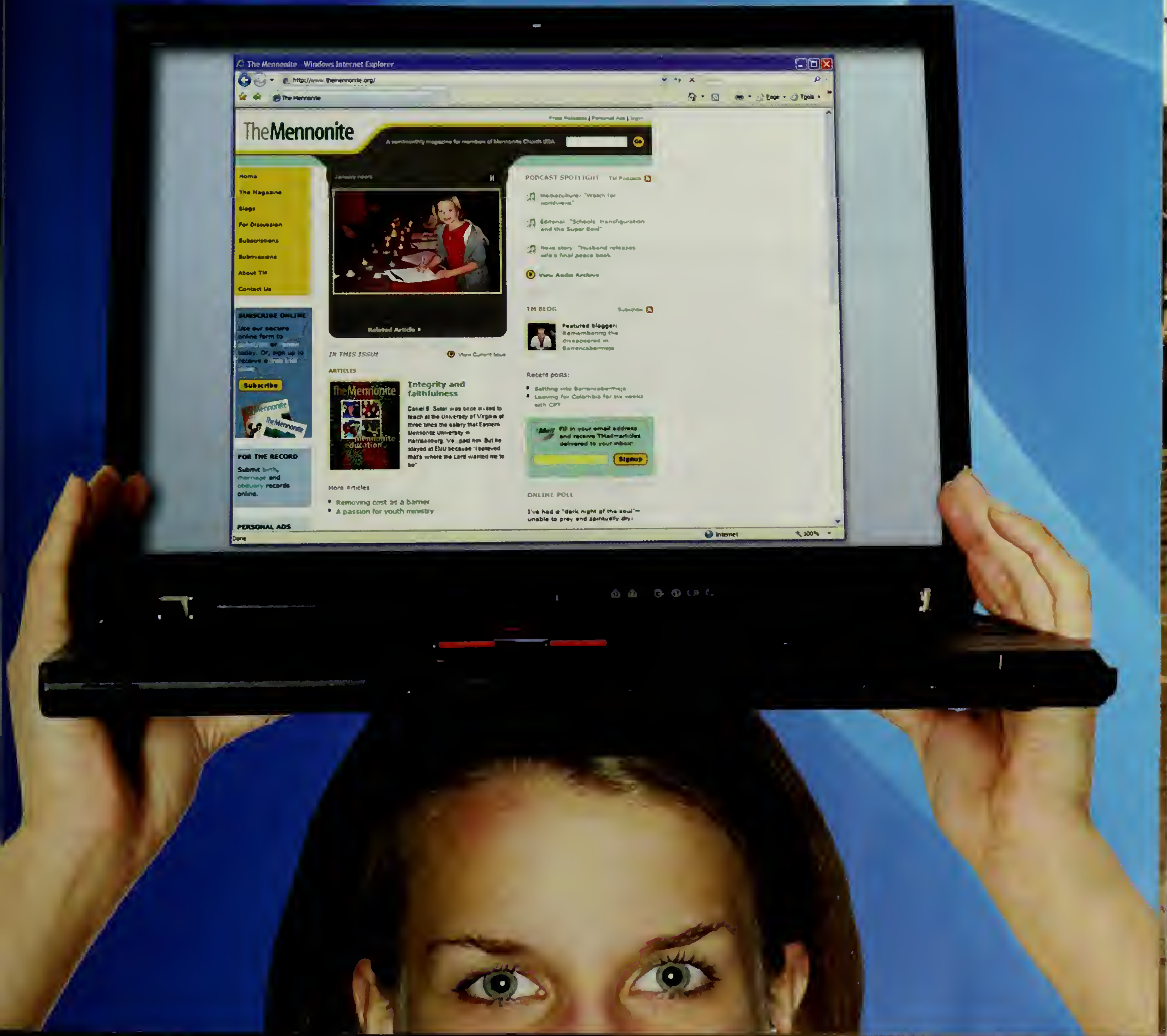
Under Article 10 ("The Church in Mission"), the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* says, "The church is … to give witness by proclaiming the reign of God in word and deed." Yet Mennonites often have been uneasy about that "word" part. We're not always comfortable with evangelism. This issue looks at proclaiming the gospel from a variety of perspectives: in a multireligious society (page 8), in relation to peace (page 10), as confession (page 12), in the face of the "new atheism" and in relationship with Jews (page 16). News stories look at reverberations from the Executive Board proposals (pages 19, 23) and women in ministry (page 20). And Anna Groff editorializes about Mennonite young adults and the church.—*Associate editor*

Make this your homepage

Make **www.themennonite.org** your homepage and get the latest news, photos, press releases and blog updates right away.

Since we post photos and news releases from all the schools, agencies and conferences, **www.themennonite.org** offers the most comprehensive news coverage available for Mennonite Church USA.

You can also answer poll questions, subscribe to RSS feeds and view videos.


The Mennonite - Windows Internet Explorer
http://www.themennonite.org/
TheMennonite
Home
The Magazine
Blogs
For Discussion
Subscriptions
Submissions
About TM
Contact Us
SUBSCRIBE ONLINE
Subscribe
FOR THE RECORD
PERSONAL ADS
PODCAST SPOTLIGHT
View Audio Archive
TM BLOG
Featured blogger:
Recent posts:
IN THIS ISSUE
ARTICLES
Integrity and faithfulness
More Articles
Removing cost as a barrier
A passion for youth ministry
Related Article
Signup
ONLINE POLL
I've had a "dark night of the soul"—unable to pray and spiritually dry:
Internet
100%
Done

IN BRIEF

Chunk of Antarctic ice shelf collapses

Seth Borenstein of the Associated Press reported March 25 that "a chunk of Antarctic ice bigger than the city of Montreal has suddenly collapsed, putting an even greater portion of glacial ice at risk." In a related article, Steve Connor of *The Independent UK* says that "for the past century, the massive Wilkins ice shelf appeared to have escaped the ravages of global warming. But now, enormous cracks have appeared in this floating ice platform the size of Northern Ireland. Scientists say it is breaking apart at an unprecedented rate after warmer temperatures weakened it."—*Truthout.org*

Year of the potato

The United Nations has proclaimed 2008 the International Year of the Potato to raise awareness of the tuber's importance in overcoming global hunger and poverty. A Web site devoted to the special year notes that over the next two decades the world's population is expected to grow by an average of 100 million people a year, more than 95 percent of it in developing countries where the pressure on land and water is already intense. The potato, the world's fourth leading food crop, is being held up as a key player to ensure food security for future generations. Go to www.potato2008.org.—*The Marketplace*

Partnership launches Spanish-language ezine

PITTSBURGH—*Meno Acontecer*, a free, monthly Spanish-language ezine, was launched April 7. The ezine is a partnership between *The Mennonite* and Mennonite Education Agency through MEA's Hispanic Pastoral and Leadership Education Office. Rafael Barahona, MEA associate director, is the ezine's managing editor.

Meno Acontecer, which means "Menno happenings," will provide Mennonite Church USA news and articles to strengthen the Anabaptist identity of Hispanics living in North America, stories from Hispanic congregations and information to promote the theological education of Hispanic Mennonites.

"Electronic communication is helping us keep in touch and be informed," Barahona says. "Not everyone in the Hispanic constituency has an Internet connection and email, but the numbers are rising. *Meno Acontecer* will be vital in bringing fresh information to our Spanish speaking constituents."

To subscribe, send your email address to MenoAcontecer@themennonite.org or call 412-894-8705.—*Anna Groff*

Kristina Landis

Easter Sunday baptism in Jordan River

Early on March 23, John A. Tyson, an Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, Va.) biblical studies and philosophy major from Lansdale, Pa., was baptized in the Jordan River by Linford L. Stutzman, associate professor of culture and mission at EMU. The baptism was witnessed by 29 fellow students in Stutzman's Middle East study group. Stutzman and his wife, Janet M. Stutzman, are leading the cross-cultural seminar in Israel during the university's second (spring) semester.—*EMU*

Lanzamiento conjunto de revista electrónica en español

PITTSBURGH—El 7 de abril se lanzó *Acontecer Menno*, una revista electrónica mensual gratuita en español. Ésta surge de una iniciativa de *The Mennonite* en colaboración con la Agencia Menonita de Educación (MEA). Se realizará a través de la oficina de Educación para el Liderazgo Pastoral Hispano de MEA, cuyo director adjunto, Rafael Barahona, es el editor ejecutivo de *Acontecer Menno*.

A fin de fortalecer la identidad anabautista de los hispanos que viven en América del Norte, *Acontecer Menno* ofrecerá noticias y artículos a la Iglesia Menonita USA, publicará relatos provenientes de las congregaciones hispanas y brindará información tendiente a promover la capacitación teológica de los menonitas hispanos.

"La comunicación electrónica permite mantenernos en contacto y estar informados," señaló Barahona. "No todos los integrantes de la membresía hispana tienen acceso a Internet y correo electrónico, pero el número va en aumento. *Acontecer Menno* será de vital importancia para facilitar información reciente a nuestros miembros de habla hispana."

Para suscribirse, envíe su dirección de correo electrónico a MenoAcontecer@themennonite.org o llame al 412-894-8705.—*Anna Groff*

Israeili settlers attack Palestinian children

AT-TUWANI, West Bank—On March 28, settlers sprayed two Palestinians in the face and eyes with some sort of aerosol, reports Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT). Later, masked settlers drove through the village, shouting insults and throwing stones at Palestinian children and a woman carrying a baby. The masked settlers retreated into the trees of the Hill 833 settlement outpost but remained visible until Israeli military arrived.

The next morning, Israeli settlers harassed, intimidated, and attacked Palestinian children on their way to and from school in the village of At-Tuwani. Settlers yelled and threw stones at the children coming to school from the villages of Tuba and Maghayir Al Abeed. The military escort in the area, which has orders to take the children to and from school to ensure their safety, did nothing during the attack.

On the same day, Israeli settlers from the Hill 833 outpost entered the village of At-Tuwani four times and harassed Palestinians, but Israeli authorities did nothing. Palestinians told CPT members a military commander threatened to tell the settlers to attack the village after the military left the area.—*CPT*

Larry Bartel

ernational celebration at Hesston College
opian students (left to right) Beemnet Tilahun, Bethlehem
gaw and Ruth Burayu perform a religious dance during
ston (Kan.) College's annual International Festival March
The theme of the 16th annual festival was "Our Religious
brations." The dance occurs during one of the important
gious celebrations and festivals for Orthodox Christians in
opia. The dance was part of a program featuring music,
s, dances and information about religious events in the
ntries of the international students.—*Hesston College*

Puerto Rico Mennonites seek funds for office

GOSHEN, Ind.—The Puerto Rico Mennonite Convention has received a building to house offices for its ministry and has asked the Indiana-Michigan Conference for financial assistance to make the renovations needed to convert it to an office facility. Approximately $20,000 is needed.

The Indiana-Michigan stewardship and finance commission is requesting support for this project through designated contributions. Many people in that conference have close ties to Mennonite ministries in Puerto Rico.

To contribute, please send a check designated "Puerto Rico" to Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, 212 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526. The funds will be forwarded to the convention. Puerto Rico Mennonite Conference briefly joined the Mennonite Church in the 1990s but did not join Mennonite Church USA—*Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference*

Day of prayer and action for Colombia

Mennonite Central Committee invites Mennonites to join congregations across the United States, Canada and Colombia as they pray for an end to the Colombian conflict and act for policy changes that reflect God's kingdom values. April 27 is the Day of Prayer when congregations will join in worship, reflection and prayer with Colombian brothers and sisters who endure great suffering and still respond with faith, sowing seeds of peace. April 28 is the Day of Action for churches to publicly witness by calling on U.S. and Canadian policy officials to promote peace and justice in Colombia. Action involves speaking with government officials, writing advocacy letters, holding public vigils and sharing stories in church from the second report on international humanitarian law and human rights violations against church and church members in 2006, available from Andrea Mendes at 717-859-1151 or AndreaMendes@mcc.org.—*MCC*

Zimbabwe's post-election future uncertain

HARARE, Zimbabwe—Zimbabweans wait—in food lines, for petrol, to get cash. And they wait to learn the results of elections in their country. Days after the March 29 elections, official results have still not been announced.

"We think the opposition may have won the elections," said Bishop Danisa Ndlovu, Mennonite World Conference president-elect on April 2, "but it is possible that there will be no clear majority."

"The BICC (Brethren in Christ Church) has been praying for peace to prevail. ... We see the calmness which prevailed during the voting exercise as an answer to the prayers of the church in Zimbabwe and beyond," he said.

Ndlovu said the church is praying that the former ruling party, if it loses the election, will "accept the outcome ... and contribute to the good of the future of our nation as a positive and credible opposition."

The four election observers sent by Mennonite World Conference at the invitation of the BICC were to monitor all stages of the election process and have free access to the polling station, said Pascal Kulungu from the Mennonite Brethren Church in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

However, the Minister of Justice denied accreditation for Kulungu and the other MWC observers, who came from South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia. Some faith-based observers were accredited. Observers without accreditation could not enter polling stations, but they did visit polls in Harare and several rural areas.—*MWC*

—compiled by Gordon Houser, Everett Thomas

IN BRIEF

Hernandez to lead intercultural office

Rebecca Hernandez, an administrator, researcher and university professor from Oregon, has accepted a faculty appointment as project director of the Goshen (Ind.) College Center for Intercultural Teaching and Learning (CITL). CITL, funded with a $12.5 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., is designed to make a Goshen College education accessible to Latino students, create an intercultural learning community for students and research the dynamics behind the changing ethnic composition in a Midwest community.—*Goshen College*

False statements

According to Charles Lewis and Mark Reading-Smith of the Center for Public Integrity, "President George W. Bush and seven of his administration's top officials ... made at least 935 false statements in the two years following Sept. 11, 2001, about the national security threat posed by Saddam Hussein's Iraq."—*Sojourners*

Evangelism
in a multireligious society

Evangelism means sharing with love that respects the freedom, thought and decision of the other person.

by Myron S. Augsburger

Evangelism is sharing the good news of Christ. It is not to proselytize or be coercive to share the grace of Christ by conversation. Evangelism in the spirit of Jesus is sharing with love that respects the freedom, thought and decision of the other person.

Evangelism is making faith in Christ an option for a person. Amid all of the religions and philosophies of life, evangelism is simply announcing what Jesus has to offer that is unique and is not found in other religions or philosophies. Evangelistic ventures among people of other religions calls for the deepest respect for others. You should study another position, another religion, until you understand it so well that you see its values clearly and could be tempted to join it. Then you can show its adherents what Jesus has to offer that is not found in another faith position.

But evangelism is a specific aspect of a loving faith. If we love the neighbor as ourselves, we will not be satisfied until we share the most important thing in life with the neighbor—life in Christ. Just as the Lord's gifts for the roles of "evangelists, pastors and teachers" each have their own uniqueness, so in a "missional church" the roles of being pastor, teaching, serving and the ministry of evangelism each have their own uniqueness.

We are witnesses of the gospel, the good news that God has not remained distant but has come to us in Jesus, that God has made himself truly known. This is different from simply holding a religion, from comparing which religion is better. God's expression of grace means that each religion must take its place as merely a consciousness of need but not as an end in itself. Faith is not a religious stance we hold but at best a response. And that response is an intelligent, informed response to the evidence in the gospel, even though such evidence does not mean proof.

If we love the neighbor as ourselves, we will not be satisfied until we share the most important thing in life with the neighbor—life in Christ.

Evangelism shares the message that God loves us and cares enough to engage the distance between us and himself and bear the cost of forgiving us. The evidence for this is his self-disclosure in Jesus. His self-disclosure involves the incarnation as living among us to express the self-giving character of God. It involves the crucifixion, not as a martyrdom but as "tasting death" for everyone by bearing the deepest hostility of humanity and speaking back a word of forgiving acceptance, thereby changing our stance in relation to God. It involves the resurrection as the declaration of God's eternal victory over every obstacle, including sin and death. It involves the rule of Christ as Lord in the kingdom of God, a rule to be accepted by us. God in his love and respect for our freedom does not coerce or manipulate us. Recognizing God's pattern through history, of being there for us but not manipulating us, we in turn should follow this pattern in evangelism.

One fear of evangelism today is that we be seen as proselytizing. Another fear arises from a sense of confrontation with other belief systems. Another is being ostracized. An answer to these fears is found in the gracious, loving expressions of Jesus, who calls people to walk with him in life but respects their freedom of decision. It is for us as evangelists to show that walking with Jesus makes more sense out of life than any other position or pattern.

Properly understood, this gospel of love holds the social and the spiritual together, for genuine faith in Christ means solidarity with him. This solidarity means walking with Jesus in daily life, loving one's neighbor as oneself, caring for the poor and the needy, loving one's enemies as well as one's friends, caring for all peoples across racial, cultural, ethnic differences.

God has no favorites, Jew or Gentile, for in his grace the role he gave the Jew was simply to open his word of grace to all peoples. Any idolizing of a given people as being especially privileged goes against the purpose of God to reach all peoples. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16). The evangelist as witness is a herald of this good news.

Evangelism calls people to follow Jesus in their own culture. We of the Western world must not think our cultural expressions are more spiritual than those of Asian, African or Latin cultures. In fact, while Christianity has contributed to the enrichment of life in the development of secularity, we do not see the secular as an end but an enriching servant to humanity. Our Western patterns at times reflect an uncritical acceptance of secularism without recognizing that the good in the secular is mutual respect for all peoples, but secularism is idolizing the secular rather than reaching beyond it in worship of God.

In world missions we have had to learn to contextualize at the deepest level, to find ways to share meanings across cultural and linguistic lines in ways that find authenticity in the new context. We cannot be authentic in mission by simply imposing Western forms of Christianity upon another culture. This should have been recognized by our government, that similarly no nation can impose its democracy upon another nation but must encourage others to find the freedoms of human rights in ways that can be best expressed in their culture.

We of the Western world must not think our cultural expressions are more spiritual than those of Asian, African or Latin cultures.

Having served as an evangelist as well as an educator and a pastor, I believe these roles need to be held together without compromising either. I pray the Lord of the church will give those gifts that will enable each of these areas of enriching service and will call many young people into these exciting and rewarding roles. Ever grateful for the encouragement I received from C.K. Lehman, J.D. Graber, John Howard Yoder and many others, I want to extend my encouragement to others in their sense of God's calling in evangelism.

Paul expresses the nature of evangelism in a meaningful passage (2 Corinthians 4:1-5): "Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake."

Myron S. Augsburger is a member of Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., and minister at large with InterChurch Evangelism, Inc.

Can we embrace both

We have dichotomized Jesus' call to be peopl

by Gay Brunt Miller

For the last decade or so, Franconia Mennonite Conference (FMC) and Mennonite Church USA have been on a journey to recapture our voice. It has been a shift from decades and even centuries of being more inwardly focused and "the quiet in the land" to finding our voice as people Jesus has called to live the Great Commission by sharing the Good News and making disciples.

One of the biggest struggles on this journey is our "peace position." I'm not trying to walk away from it; that's far from the truth. But in our society and even in our congregations, this is a loaded conversation. We have dichotomized Jesus' call to be people of peace and to share the Good News as though either or both of them are optional.

So we often find our FMC congregations in one of two camps—either we are trying to live out our call to be peace churches or we are trying to win souls into the kingdom. And it's hard to have a civilized conversation about peace and evangelism at the same time. The tension is often palpable when these two values confront one another. Why?

When we relegate Jesus' call to follow him in a way of peace and as people of peace to "the Mennonite peace position," we pose our worldview as though it is an optional add-on to following Christ.

I certainly don't have the answers, but let me share a few observations:

1. "The Mennonite peace position": I don't find it helpful to talk about "the Mennonite peace position." It's much more than that. Jesus has called us to follow him and to live into the kingdom of God here on earth, as much as that is possible. When we relegate Jesus' call to follow him in a way of peace and as people of peace to "the Mennonite peace position," we pose our worldview as though it is an optional add-on to following Christ. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, has called us to follow his example. We are called to live Christ's gospel of peace; it's not a "take it or leave it" option.

2. Peace is broader than war: Being people of peace is more than the issue of whether we go to war or not. How is it that our conversation about being peacemakers so often goes right to that end of the spectrum? During a trip to the United Kingdom, I was struck by the way our Anabaptist brothers and sisters in the U.K. have a lot to say about being peacemakers and people of peace, and war is not the center of every conversation. More often I heard this translated into people taking seriously Christ's call to care for the poor and those on the margins of society. Working for social justice is an important part of living out Christ's way of peace.

3. Because of or in spite of? As we understand what it means to be missional, new people are joining us. In some cases they are people who join us because of our core values. In the U.K., people from many walks of life consider themselves Anabaptists, even though there is only one Mennonite congregation and two Hutterite communities. They embrace Anabaptist theology as something that completes their biblical understanding, something they have been missing. They describe it as feeling like they have "come home." We have those stories in our FMC congregations, too. We also have those who feel at home among us in spite of our core value of Christ's call to be people of peace. I embrace the shifted paradigm of people first belonging, then believing, then having their behavior change. Too often in the past we have slammed the door on people's fragile journey toward faith, driving them from us. But how can we be transparent and true to our core values at the same time we invite people from different places to follow Jesus' example?

4. Lost language: Have we been the quiet in the land for so long that we have lost a healthy way of being able to talk about being people of peace? Have we learned this from our parents and grandparents, as they hunkered down under the persecution they faced as conscientious objectors? Can we find a new language for our continent, a language that is relevant to our culture (and cultural diversity) in the United States today? Can we find language that transcends old paradigm bounds of being persecuted/ethnic/cultural Mennonites of Swiss-German descent? Can we learn that lan-

peace and evangelism?

peace and to share the Good News.

Michelle Zook | Eastern Mennonite Missions

guage from our Anabaptist brothers and sisters from Asia, Africa and South America who are living out what it means to embody Christ's gospel of peace in churches, many of which face persecution yet are growing by leaps and bounds?

5. Our voice is desired: Among others, the emergent church movement is inviting us to come to the table. They believe Anabaptists have an important voice to add to the conversation of who the followers of Jesus are called to be. They are asking us to bring the light Jesus has shown us. None of us has the whole truth, but they want us to bring our best understanding of who Jesus has called us to be to a conversation of what God is calling the church to be in this rapidly changing world. (Emergent Village describes itself as "a growing, generative friendship among missional Christians seeking to love our world in the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Brian McLaren is a key leader in this group. For more information, check out www.emergentvillage.com.)

6. Evangelists: In Matthew 28, Jesus commissioned his disciples to share the Good News. Who of us can deny that as a commission that transcends the ages? For too long we have muzzled the Good News. Being commissioned is more than "do it if it's convenient or if you feel like it." A commission is to be taken seriously. Our FMC history is littered with evangelists who could not find a place among us. They have gone out from us to found churches such as Calvary Church of Souderton, BranchCreek Community Church, Living Faith and more. The kingdom is still blessed by their gifts, but how can we make space for—and even embrace—evangelists to use their God-given gifts among us? What drives them out from us?

Can we find ways to share the Good News that Christ has called us to—in all its fullness? Can we be evangelists that work for peace?

Gay Brunt Miller works for Franconia Mennonite Conference.

Can we find language that transcends old paradigm bounds of being persecuted/ethnic/cultural Mennonites of Swiss-German descent?

Juliet Yeda/Mennonite Mission Network

Confessiona

Showing up to give confessions, not take them

by Greg Albright

I am not saying you should put up a tent at the next wild party that goes on. Maybe you should just go into the party and be Jesus there. I don't want to say much, because I don't want this to be about the four of us who were there that night. I want to show what happened.

Swarthmore College, just outside Philadelphia, is not known for its parties. It's a school where studies come first and social activism takes a close second. It is appropriate, then, that the greatest debauch of the academic year occurs at an academic summit—the Sager Symposium for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Studies. Ask any student of the college, however, and the word Sager will bring up only the party that ends the conference. The party's unofficial motto is, "Guys wear a dress, girls wear less." The party's theme that year was, "The Seven Deadly Sins."

We decided to build our confessional there. Inspired by Don Miller's *Blue Like Jazz*, we decided to sit out on campus and be a visible Christian presence in the party that had spread to three buildings. Our tent was on the path that connected them all. A guy in a black cocktail dress asked us what we were doing.

"We're here to confess, to apologize."

"For what?"

"We follow Jesus, and we want to apologize for any times we haven't been like him. The church has done some bad stuff and given lots of people the wrong impressions about Jesus, and we want to apologize for that, too."

'We follow Jesus, and we want to apologize for any times we haven't been like him.'

I never expected it to happen. Just the idea of people assuming they were being asked to confess could fall flat on its face. But one night the idea just spilled out: "What if we did this confessional thing?"

"What will we use for a confessional?" Jeff asked.

"I'm going to ask my parents to bring our tent."

I had second thoughts: We will be ridiculed and chased off campus by a drunken mob; and third thoughts: I could never do something like this; and fourth thoughts: I shouldn't try, because this is really just about my pride. On Wednesday, I decided I should pray about it. The party was Saturday.

"If anyone wants to help with my confessional idea," I said, "could you just hang out after small group for a little while?"

"We'll be praying for you," said everyone.

Only Jeff, Cecelia and Erik stayed behind in the campus coffee bar.

"I don't know what I'm doing," I said, "and I've been trying not to do any prep work, but it looks like God wants this tent to go up, and if you guys want in, I'd appreciate it."

They agreed they were in this for good, completely together in prayer (Acts 1:14, *The Message*). The tent arrived Thursday morning, and at 9:30 p.m. on Saturday, I wrote the word CONFESS in duct tape on a white box lid. At 9:45, we pitched the tent, a few hundred yards from the party.

"I didn't want us to be right in the thick of things," I explained, "in case people get rowdy or something. And nobody will be going down right at 10, so we should have time to set up and pray. My mom sent us some cookies."

We had our first visitors at 10 sharp. Jeff and I were in the tent. Erik and Cecelia were praying in a nearby building. We planned to take 15-minute shifts.

Jeff and I bumbled our way through our "talk"—the planned speech about what we were doing here with this sign.

"Do you want a cookie?" I asked our guest. She was nice about asking why we had a tent and a CONFESS sign.

"I'd love a cookie," she said, "but as a member of the queer community, I would like it even more if you would actually go down to the party for a while."

"I will," I said, and I meant it. I wanted to thank her for not burning our tent down.

"It's kind of creepy inside," said another visitor. "Maybe you could sit outside the tent. But this is really cool what you guys are doing."

We got some folding chairs, and I brought my djembe. Someone asked if we were starting a hippie commune. Things were quiet.

"Do you think maybe we should move more into the center of things?" said Jeff.

"I think that would be good," said Cecelia. I had some reservations. I liked things quiet. But I took a tent pole, and we hiked into the space among Greed, Lust, Sloth, Envy, Gluttony, Pride and

evangelism

Stockxpert.com

Anger. We set up right in the thick of things, on the main path to the party. Every partygoer passed by our tent. Guys wearing dresses and girls wearing less.

"As your sister in Christ, I want you to come inside and dance with me," said one.

Although I knew her from Swarthmore Swing Dancing, I had never seen her at a Christian Fellowship meeting. We entered the first floor—Envy. Green lights highlighted photos of nearly nude models scrawled with obscenities.

"Envious of beauty," she said.

"Why isn't the food and alcohol in the Gluttony room?"

"They need to spread the drinking around," she said.

When I looked into the dance crowd, I could see why people were not staying at our tent to talk. This party was great—strobe lights, swing dancing, costumes (many of which were beginning to fall off). I was surprised, when I returned, to find people were still at the tent. People looking for their roommates, people tired of the party scene and friends wanting to talk stopped by. Our cookies did not last long.

A guy in a trench coat and a black tutu walked by, supporting a stumbling drunk.

"Do you want a hand?" we asked. Inside the health center, Trench Coat Guy patted the drunk on the shoulder, holding the trash can to catch the vomit.

"A friend of yours?" I asked.

"Nah, he's from out of town, but I figured we should get him some help, keep him out of trouble. Gwen's the real hero."

"Gwen?"

"The one who went to the hospital with him."

"Oh, I thought she knew him."

"No, she goes here. She just found him sitting out back and called me to help carry him over here."

"And she rode in the ambulance with him?"

"Yeah, she probably won't get back till tomorrow morning."

Jesus was at Swarthmore: a guy in a trench coat and a tutu carrying a visitor to the health center; a student giving up her whole night to ensure the health of a stranger. It made me wonder what we were doing at our little tent. If we should even have set it up.

"Would Jesus come to the Sager party?" Cecelia asked.

"Hell yeah! Jesus loved to hang out with prostitutes."

That was not the only time we asked that question. We left the tent up. Paul mended tents. Ours seemed to say, "Come talk to us. We have a tent." People told us they respected what we were doing, that they appreciated our presence, that they were Christians from local colleges, inspired by what God was doing at godless Swarthmore. It was 2 a.m., one hour from the party's close.

"What are you guys doing here?"

"It's, well, it's to apologize, but it's also for accountability."

"What do you mean?"

"We're saying that we're Christians and that we want to follow Jesus' example. You can call me out whenever you see me doing something Jesus wouldn't do."

"How will I know?"

"You'll know."

At three in the morning, we took down the tent, and even as we struck the poles we were talking about Jesus and how we wanted to be like him, how we were sorry for all the times we hadn't been like him and for all the times Jesus' name had been abused.

We were among the last people to leave the party. The tent had left a square of flattened grass. Everything else was piled in our arms or slung on our backs.

"We did it," I said.

"God did it," someone said. "We didn't have anything to do with it."

I'm not saying you should put up a tent at the next wild party that goes on. Maybe you should just go into the party and be Jesus there. I don't want to say much, because I don't want this to be about the four of us who were there that night. I want to show what happened. God will take things from there, in the same way he has brought us here.

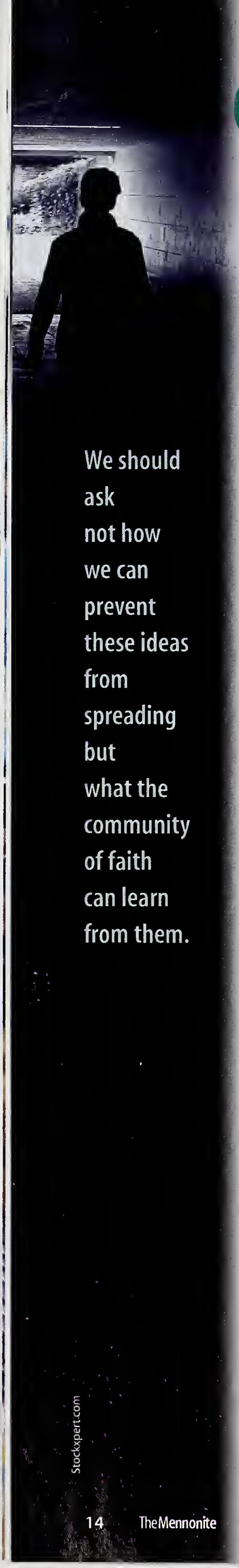
Jesus was at Swarthmore: a guy in a trench coat and a tutu carrying a visitor to the health center; a student giving up her whole night to ensure the health of a stranger.

Greg Albright is a member of Whitehall (Pa.) Mennonite Church and a student at Swarthmore College.

Christ and the new

The New Atheists present the church with an opportuni

by Victor J. Sensenig



Stockxpert.com

We should ask not how we can prevent these ideas from spreading but what the community of faith can learn from them.

I first encountered Bertrand Russell's "Why I Am Not a Christian" in a college philosophy class. It could not have been found within five miles of my Mennonite high school's library. But the Christian liberal arts college I attended considered us spiritually mature enough to not be derailed by a five-page modernist screed that just celebrated its 80th birthday. Russell's principal objection to Christianity was its alleged foundation on fear: "Fear is the basis of the whole thing—fear of the mysterious, fear of defeat, fear of death." Our classroom discussion eventually determined that the rise of postmodernism has allowed Christianity to return to the table of intellectual respectability.

Now a new batch of books has reopened the case against faith with a fervor that even Russell never approached. Among the recent crop of atheistic apologetics are Sam Harris' *The End of Faith* (2004), Daniel Dennett's *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (2006), Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* (2006) and, most recently and most provocatively titled, Christopher Hitchens' *God Is Not Great* (2007). These books have been selling phenomenally in Europe and America, revealing a widespread hunger for open and aggressive skepticism about the role of religion in public life. This group of writers even has a name: the New Atheists.

The basic arguments of the two I read (Harris and Dawkins) are similar. First, they note that religion and the irrational belief it inspires stand behind much of the conflict in the world and many of the atrocities of past centuries (the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Holocaust, Sept. 11). Faith, they claim, ignores evidence and common sense, making a believer capable of great evil. Second, they argue that the world can be more satisfactorily explained by science instead of a supernatural designer and that an appreciation of the difference between good and evil does not require scriptural basis. Third, they propose an alternative approach to spirituality; Dawkins admits to a "pantheistic reverence" and Harris advertises the mind-opening possibilities of meditation. Ultimately, though, they serve less to outline a worldview than to attempt to destroy another.

These books seem to be a response to the perceived expansion of fundamentalism in the Middle East and the West. Political leaders all over the world favor religious language when praising their own policies and condemning their enemies. Nonbelievers in the West also fear the erosion of the separation of church and state, as evidenced by the resistance to accepted scientific ideas such as evolution and global warming. But the most convincing answer, though hard to admit, may be that organized religion is actually sick. While Harris and Dawkins advocate euthanizing theistic worship, the church must look for healing.

The vast majority of Christians will not read these books, and some will even question the judgment of a believer who is curious about them. Are they harmful? Are they worth our time? I would differentiate between a frivolous attack on faith and serious, rigorous questioning, a category these books seem to fall into. On the other hand, the response of some believers has been to rush into battle against these bold denials of faith. I'm sure pastors are thumbing through the books for juicy quotations, if not actually reading the whole text, in order to set up an atheistic straw man to pummel with Scripture.

As Anabaptists, though, we should consider our practice of seeking a third way, which seems to me to be the willingness to ask not how we can prevent these ideas from spreading but what the community of faith can learn from them.

Refuse to demonize atheism: The vitriolic tone of these books is a direct consequence of the long tradition of demonizing unbelief. Atheism is a convenient foil, a label for any suspect political, social or scientific movement. We should recall that the people most roundly criticized by Jesus, John the Baptist and even the Old Testament prophets were not unbelievers but religious hypocrites. Jesus socialized with publicans, Roman commanders and spiritually searching religious elite. Even more crucially, he did not "perform" miracles in order to create belief; he healed the sick and fed the hungry. Early in his ministry, he even instructed the beneficiaries not to spread the news, possibly concerned about the cheap belief such rumors would inspire. The hero of the most famous parable of Jesus, the Good Samaritan, could well be a compassionate atheist.

Rediscover the radical Jesus: As Sam Harris writes in *The End of Faith*, "Religious moderation

theism

assess its failings and refocus on priorities.

is the product of secular knowledge and scriptural ignorance—and it has no bona fides, in religious terms, to put it on par with fundamentalism." The religious moderate is only moderate because he or she is not fully committed to the faith and is not willing to follow through with (or is not aware of) the commands of God. There is something to this argument; in fact, we can read it as a prophetic challenge to the church.

Although hostile to such beliefs as the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, the New Atheists are surprisingly open to the actual message of Christ. In fact, they contrast it with the church's values and actions. Harris ponders the question of "how the church managed to transform Jesus' principal message of loving one's neighbor and turning the other cheek into a doctrine of murder and rapine." Dawkins scoffs at the "gentle, meek and mild" Jesus but observes that "this milksop persona owes more to his Victorian followers than to Jesus himself," who he considers "one of the great ethical innovators of history." The New Atheists recognize—in a way some of the church has forgotten—that the message of Christ is radical. Christ calls us to nothing less than love for enemies and servant leadership. True discipleship is not moderate.

Embrace a multicultural church: Harris and Dawkins write from an academic environment that is moving past moral relativism, which claims that our ideas can never completely correspond with reality and thus no one can claim a monopoly on the "truth." These two firmly believe that statements about the world can be true or false and that ethical truths can be discovered. Harris argues, "Respect for diversity in our ethical views is, at best, an intellectual holding pattern until more of the facts are in." To his mind, multiculturalism is weakness.

In fact, religion is intimately bound up in culture, and an attack on a particular religion will be felt not as a merely intellectual foray but as ignorant, insulting and often threatening. The great strength of the church—and the reason it continues to be compelling for many—is the ability of the community of believers to make a truth claim while continuing to accept differences in interpretation and application. One of the great challenges of worshiping in a Mennonite church in Indonesia has concerned the question of military participation. While I hold fast to a commitment to nonviolence, it has been instructive to consider the question from the perspective of a people treated as a Dutch colony as recently as 1947. Our embrace of a multicultural community refutes the claim that truth rules out diversity and that religion can only inspire conflict.

Disciples of Christ stand opposed to most of what the New Atheists assert. We proclaim not only the existence of God but the imminence of the kingdom of God. We accept the mystery of parts of our faith, including the Trinity and the afterlife. But we miss hearing a prophetic word if we ignore them entirely, no matter how stridently secular the mouthpiece. The rise of New Atheism presents us with an opportunity to assess our failings and refocus on our priorities. The best counter is not another slightly more shrill argument but a searching look at ourselves.

Victor J. Sensenig is a member of Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

A spate of books are coming out in response to the new atheism. **God and the New Atheism: A Critical Response to Dawkins, Harris and Hitchens** by John F. Haught (Westminster John Knox Press, 2008, $16.95) argues that these writers' understanding of religious faith "remains consistently at the same unscholarly level as the unreflective, superstitious and literalist religiosity of those they criticize." These "new atheists" argue less from reason than from ignorance and sarcasm. For example, "Dennet's belief that science can provide an adequate understanding of religion is obviously not a scientifically proven or even provable claim. It is a dogma, a declaration of faith. No massive accumulation of sarcastic putdowns or intellectual gymnastics can conceal this fact from the critical reader." These books are so popular partly because there are so few critical readers. Theologian Haught demonstrates that these writers have no acquaintance with most theology, which "allows that faith and hope are entirely consistent with and fully supportive of human reason, including its pursuit of scientific understanding." The new atheists, Haught shows, reflect the fundamentalism they attack and use fallacious reasoning to try to make their case.

The New Atheists: The Twilight of Reason and the War on Religion by Tina Beattie (Orbis Books, 2007, $20) takes a different approach. Beattie, a British theologian, wants to "broaden the discussion by situating it in a wider social and historical context." She calls the wholesale condemnation of religion an ideology that, "like all ideologies, involves considerable distortion of history and a lack of the kind of insight which would invite a more nuanced approach to the role played by religion in different contexts." She also examines the masculine bias of the argument: "Let the men fight about God if they want to. My concern is not with debates about God but with creation and nature, with language and meaning, with people and with kindness." Both books are helpful, worth reading.—*Gordon Houser*

Gamaliel's God

Christians, Jews and faith today

by Jeremy Garber

It may seem the ancient rift between Jews and Christians has largely been healed. Reform Jews and mainline pastors gladly trade pulpits and attend social justice rallies together, while Orthodox Jews and evangelical Christians work together to fund the settlements of Israel. Each alliance has its strengths and weaknesses. But Christians still carry the moral imperative to "never forget."

We must continue to name publicly the savage slaughter of millions of Jewish people in Europe under the National Socialist Regime in Germany in the name of patriotism, family and moral values—a climate uncannily similar to our contemporary culture of fear. Who is to say the pendulum of religious hatred is not about to swing again? After centuries of violence visited on Jewish people in the name of avenging Jesus, and particularly after the inexplicable tragedy of the Shoah ("the burning," the name that the Jewish people give to the Holocaust during World War II because a holocaust is a burnt offering to God, and this was no divine offering), Christians owe it to Jews—and to Jesus—to get our relationship straight. Not only our relationship to Jews, our spiritual siblings, and Muslims, our spiritual cousins, but to people of all religious and faith traditions—Buddhists, Hindus, Wiccans and "spiritual but not religious" people—who are no longer strangers but live in our neighborhoods as well as around the globe.

Christians owe it to Jews—and to Jesus—to get our relationship straight.

In Acts 5, somebody is clearly concerned about this whole new Jesus thing, this radical doomsday cult that claims its founder was raised from the dead, these socialist hippies who pooled all their money and gave it to the poor, these threatening subversives who are so unafraid of political and religious power that they break out of jail and keep saying what they have to say. Who is this somebody? It's certainly not the entire Jewish people; verses 12-16 say that great numbers of men and women came to believe in the Lord, those from Jerusalem and from the towns around it, responding positively to Jesus' message.

Verses 17 and 18 go on to tell us who's really freaked out by this mass popularity among the crowds: "Then the high priest took action; he and all who were with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), being filled with jealousy, arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison." The Sadducees appear regularly in the Gospels, the radically conservative old guard in charge of the temple sacrifices. It was this group of religiously and politically powerful conservatives who found the new Jesus movement dangerous: for its blasphemous claim to resurrection (the Sadducees didn't believe in resurrection at all), for its attention to healing in violation of established moral laws, and most of all for its attraction to the outcasts and the poor.

It is their leader, the high priest himself, who brings Peter and the other apostles into the highest of high courts. The high priest's statement contains two layers. "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," the political layer, the clampdown on a mass movement that could control the headlock they have on religious expression. "And you are determined to bring this man's blood on us," the second layer, the fear of violent reprisal—one proven true unfortunately, if "us" is understood as the Jewish people. Even Martin Luther castigated the Jews as Christ-killers and oathbreakers, and this violence continues today.

Examine, however, Peter's response: "We must obey God rather than any human authority." The "us" the high priest refers to, and the "you" Peter refers to when he says "you killed by hanging him on a tree," means the powers of the day, those forces more concerned about following the rules and maintaining the old customs than encountering the living God. It was those powers, the ones threatened by the upside-down Carnival parade that had marched into Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday such a short time earlier, that reacted with what they thought was the ultimate trump card at their disposal—the power of punishment and death, the "hanging on a tree" that was the ultimate curse of God according to Deuteronomy. It was not the Jews who killed Jesus any more than it was the Romans or any other ethnic or religious group.

Interestingly, it is the God of the Hebrew Scriptures that gives an answer to these powers of death. In the following passage, Acts 5:33-39, Gamaliel, a respected teacher (named later as the teacher of Paul), makes a striking argument. He says (I paraphrase here respectfully), "Look, gen-

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

AMBS window

Spring 2008
Volume 18 Issue 2

2 Serving and learning in the community (cont.)

3 Welcome and tensions

Outreach in downtown Elkhart

4 President's Window

Panorama

50 years in Elkhart

Serving and learning in the community

Elkhart, Indiana, has been the context for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary for 50 years. In 1958 Mennonite Biblical Seminary (MBS), a school of the previous General Conference Mennonite Church, moved from Chicago, Ill., to a new campus on the south edge of Elkhart. That fall, AMBS began as a cooperative venture between MBS and nearby Goshen Biblical Seminary (GBS), a school of the previous Mennonite Church. In 1969 GBS moved from the Goshen College campus to the Elkhart campus, and in 1993 the two schools were incorporated as one seminary.

This issue of AMBS Window *explores the significance of Elkhart as home for the seminary. Through several vignettes, we will look at how experiences in Elkhart help prepare students for ministry and how the seminary makes contributions to the city where we live and work.*

— editor

Mentoring: Doing something now

Moriah Hurst

In my second year of seminary I was chafing at the bit to have some kind of involvement in the community around me. I was not content to only train for ministry; I wanted to be doing something now. But as a student I had little time. From a forum on campus I heard about a program called CARES (Communities Actively Relating to Elkhart Schools) that places mentors alongside kids who need some help at school.

I am not good at spelling or math but I like to hang out with people, so I signed up. For half an hour each week since then, I spend time getting to know my mentee. I have been matched with two girls, one in first grade and then one in second. Some weeks we work on their school work or play educational games. Other times we sit and draw, look through books or tell each other what we have been doing. There is a rush of joy as I enter each classroom and am greeted

(continued on p. 2)

Mary E Klassen

AMBS student Moriah Hurst and Sharetta read a book together in the library at Roosevelt Elementary School, where Sharreta is a student.

2007–2008

Serving and learning in the community

Moriah Hurst and Sharetta, the student she mentors

Mentoring (continued from page 1)

by my mentee grabbing my hand and hugging my leg along with a chorus of "Hello, Miss Moriah" from the rest of the class.

I am not sure that the 30 to 40 minutes I spend at the school each week makes a huge difference. I do know that I can't change the home environments of the kids in my neighborhood and yet am not content to just let it go at that. I am glad to be a helpful adult and a friend in the life of a little person who might not always get affirmation. Beyond my weekly trips up the street to Roosevelt, I have a picture of my mentee and me on my refrigerator. As I walk by it every day I say a prayer for that little smiling face and the life she represents.

Moriah Hurst, a Master of Divinity student, gives this glimpse into a program that began ten years ago. Michele Hershberger, now a Bible professor at Hesston (Kan.) College, Hesston, Kan., began a mentoring effort when she was an AMBS student and mentored a classmate of her daughter's at another school near the campus.

Mentoring activities involve AMBS students and employees in spending time with elementary school students during class time and at lunch and playing games together before school begins in the mornings.

Assisting Habitat for Humanity

Hammers and saws—not only texbooks and computers—can be tools for seminary learning. The AMBS Student Peace and Justice Committee sponsored an effort to assist with a Habitat for Humanity house in the neighborhood a half mile north of the campus on November 19.

This effort was an addendum to another project in 2005, when the student committee took on the task of funding and organizing workers for a Habitat building blitz. The earlier home-building project was located between Goshen and Elkhart, so the fall 2007 effort gave students and faculty an opportunity to work in their own neighborhood.

Ted Koontz, professor of peace studies and ethics, and Samantha Lioi, AMBS student, cut baseboard trim for a Habitat for Humanity construction project.

Photos by Mary E Klassen

Part-time job becomes ministry

Joe and Cara Pfeiffer are first-year students at AMBS who have found that their part-time work of substitute teaching is a form of ministry.

Joe works two days a week and Cara three days a week, reporting where each has been called for the day—one of 19 schools in the Elkhart Community School district.

Joe says, "Doing this as a seminary student gives grounding. I'm asking, 'How is what I'm learning going to affect these people?' It helps me think about how I will minister in the future."

Cara adds, "It's definitely a stretching exercise." Substitute teaching provides "a presence of love" for the students and the other teachers they encounter.

!explore

A Theological Program for High School Youth

!Explore will serve in Elkhart

When 15 high school youth gather this summer for !Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth, the service component will involve them in the neighborhoods of Elkhart. Rather than going to another city, such as Chicago or Miami (as in previous years), !Explore now will work with Elkhart churches and organizations. Andy Brubacher Kaethler, !Explore director, says this will allow participants to more fully integrate service with their worship and theological exploration experiences. ●

1958–mid-1960s

Welcome and tensions

In the early years, the relationship between AMBS and Elkhart was an "interesting mix," Erland Waltner says. Erland was president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary from the launch of AMBS in 1958 until 1978.

Some snapshots:

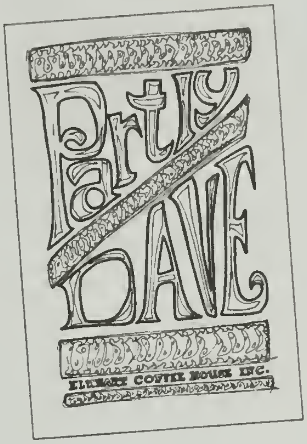
- When Erland met the president of Elkhart's First National Bank, he had not said anything about funds when the bank president handed him a check for $1,000. "It was a gesture of welcoming that was more than words.," Erland said.
- The contractor, Henry Knuck, employed workers—many of whom were Mennonites—who were not members of the AFL Carpenters Union, and the union protested with pickets to prevent delivery of materials. "At points it looked like we would be done in," Erland reported. In this conflict, the seminary received support from civic leaders but not necessarily from workers in Elkhart.
- In the early 1960s, the sale of a lot to an African-American family created tensions. "We knew the sale would incite opposition, but it was a witness on our part," Erland said. The Ku Klux Klan symbolized the opposition by burning crosses on lawns of both the seminary and the home built on the lot.
- The 1968 establishment of Church Community Services is the result of efforts led by C.J. Dyck, AMBS administrator and professor, Erland notes. CCS now involves more than 50 churches in addressing needs for food and utilities and in helping to empower women with job skills. ●

Archive photo

The executive committee of the MBS board checks on the progress of construction on the Elkhart campus, May 28, 1958: R.L. Hartzler, Erland Waltner, J.N. Smucker, Henry Knuck (contractor), A.E. Kreider.

1966–mid-1970s

Outreach in downtown Elkhart



When Leland Harder, professor at MBS and AMBS, used *The Coffee House Ministry** for an evangelism course, his students said, "Let's do it!"

So the coffee house called Partly Dave began in downtown Elkhart in 1966, a cooperative venture of AMBS, the Elkhart County Council of Churches and a number of congregations. Open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings until at least 1974, Partly Dave offered skits, live music, drug abuse seminars, a Japanese tea ceremony and, most of all, a safe place for conversation for youth in the city.

A high school senior was quoted in an article in the May 1967 *Youth's Christian Companion,* saying, "A lot of kids come in here that would normally be roaming the streets; here they have a place to express ideas and to hear other ideas."

A sophomore said, "No one really comes out and says, 'We're going to talk about religion today.' It just sort of sneaks up through programs."

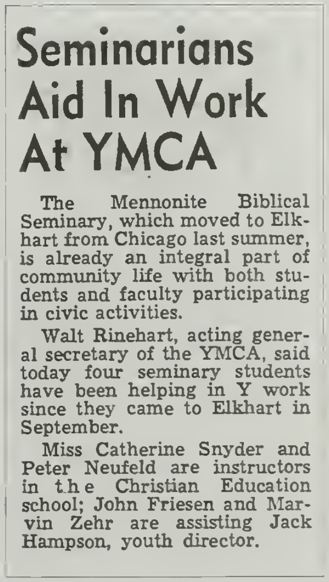
The first paid manager was AMBS student David Schmidt. Subsequent managers included Dale Sudermann, now a professional counselor in Chicago; Robert Charles, until recently with Mennonite Mission Network; John Kampen, college dean and professor formerly with Bluffton University; and Lauren Friesen, drama professor who has taught at Goshen College. The staff were all volunteers from churches in the community. One waiter was an Elkhart judge who served coffee and doughnutes to his parolees.

Leland, who taught at MBS and AMBS between 1955 and the mid 1980s, explained, "Partly Dave's was one of the more successful seminary-related coffee houses and outlived most of them. I spent a fair amount of time at Party Dave's on weekends, trying to practice what I was teaching in the evangelism course."

**The Coffee House Ministry* by John D. Perry, Jr. (John Knox Press 1966) ●

Former faculty and students have shared reflections and memories of AMBS 50 years ago. Read these at www.ambs.edu/aniversary-dedication.

1958



Seminarians Aid In Work At YMCA

The Mennonite Biblical Seminary, which moved to Elkhart from Chicago last summer, is already an integral part of community life with both students and faculty participating in civic activities.

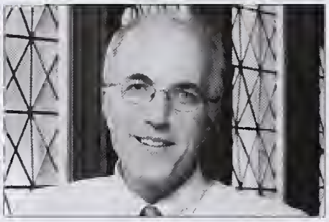
Walt Rinehart, acting general secretary of the YMCA, said today four seminary students have been helping in Y work since they came to Elkhart in September.

Miss Catherine Snyder and Peter Neufeld are instructors in the Christian Education school; John Friesen and Marvin Zehr are assisting Jack Hampson, youth director.

Reproduced from *The Elkhart Truth*

President's Window

As AMBS celebrates our fiftieth anniversary, we are rethinking the task of leadership formation. In the next half century, AMBS will prepare men and women for ministry and mission in a Western culture that increasingly looks like the setting into which Priscilla, Aquila and others first spoke the gospel: a multi-religious world in which Christians are a minority—sometimes a despised minority—with little political power. AMBS will be preparing leaders for witness from the margins, for evangelism from a minority position and for church as a community of alternative allegiance.



Being Anabaptist is a gift, because ours is a long tradition of functioning at the margins. Our spiritual memory includes persecution, perseverance, bold testimony and resisting the Powers. Mennonites recently have learned much from Catholics, Pentecostals, Evangelicals and others. It is urgent that we also claim our spiritual inheritance and bring forth the treasures of Anabaptism for ourselves and the whole people of God.

We need leaders who cherish the riches of this stream of renewal, who have the courage to lead the church into countercultural ways of the Kingdom of God. Otherwise Mennonites will be swamped by the forces of consumerism, militarism and individualism so pervasive in the West.

Even as AMBS welcomes students and faculty from beyond the Mennonite Church, we are committed to remaining Anabaptist. Our calling is to embody central aspects of an Anabaptist vision: a biblically-ground people who confess Christ as Lord, worship God three-in-one and follow Jesus in a ministry of reconciliation in the world. Anabaptists emphasize discipleship, evangelism, community, economic sharing, peacemaking, service and hospitality. Mennonites will most productively engage other traditions, and best meet the needs of a suffering world, if we claim our own strengths.

— J. Nelson Kraybill

Alumni News

In *The Way is Made by Walking* (InterVarsity 2007) **Arthur Paul Boers** (Master of Arts: Peace Studies 1983 and associate professor of pastoral theology) shares insights and experiences of walking the 500-mile Camino de Santiago. The book and Arthur's reflections on nurturing faith through pilgrimages like this have garnered attention from media, such as Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, "100 Huntley Street" on a Canadian Christian television network and the *Toronto Star.*

Vern Rempel (Master of Divinity 1986) completed a Doctor of Ministry degree in preaching at Iliff School of Theology, June 2007.

Rachel Epp Miller (Master of Divinity 2004) was ordained on February 24. She serves the San Antonio (Texas) Mennonite Church.

Panorama

When AMBS moved to Elkhart, it turned corn and soybean fields into a 43-acre campus. Now the city surrounds the campus, with cultural, retail and civic resources nearby. AMBS's setting now is reflected in these statistics and details:

Elkhart population: 51,874
Elkhart median household income: $34,863
Languages spoken by students in Elkhart schools: 30

Within three miles of AMBS:

- Median income spans $11,000 to $69,000.
- 46% of the residents in some neighborhoods are African American.
- 31% of the residents in some neighborhoods are Hispanic or Latino.
- Eight Mennonite churches have meeting houses where seminary students worship and do internships.
- Elkhart hosts an annual jazz festival, an art museum, a symphony and a series of connecting city parks for recreation.

Within 20 miles of AMBS:

- The University of Notre Dame and Goshen College offer myriad music, sports and cultural events.
- A stable economy is based on manufacturing, educational institutions and service agencies.
- Diversity abounds, including Amish, Hispanic and Ukranian communities.

Spring 2008
Volume 18 Issue 2

The purpose of *AMBS Window* is to invite readers to call people to leadership ministries, and to provide ways for readers to become involved with AMBS through financial support, prayer support and student recruiting.

Editor, designer, photographer:
Mary E. Klassen

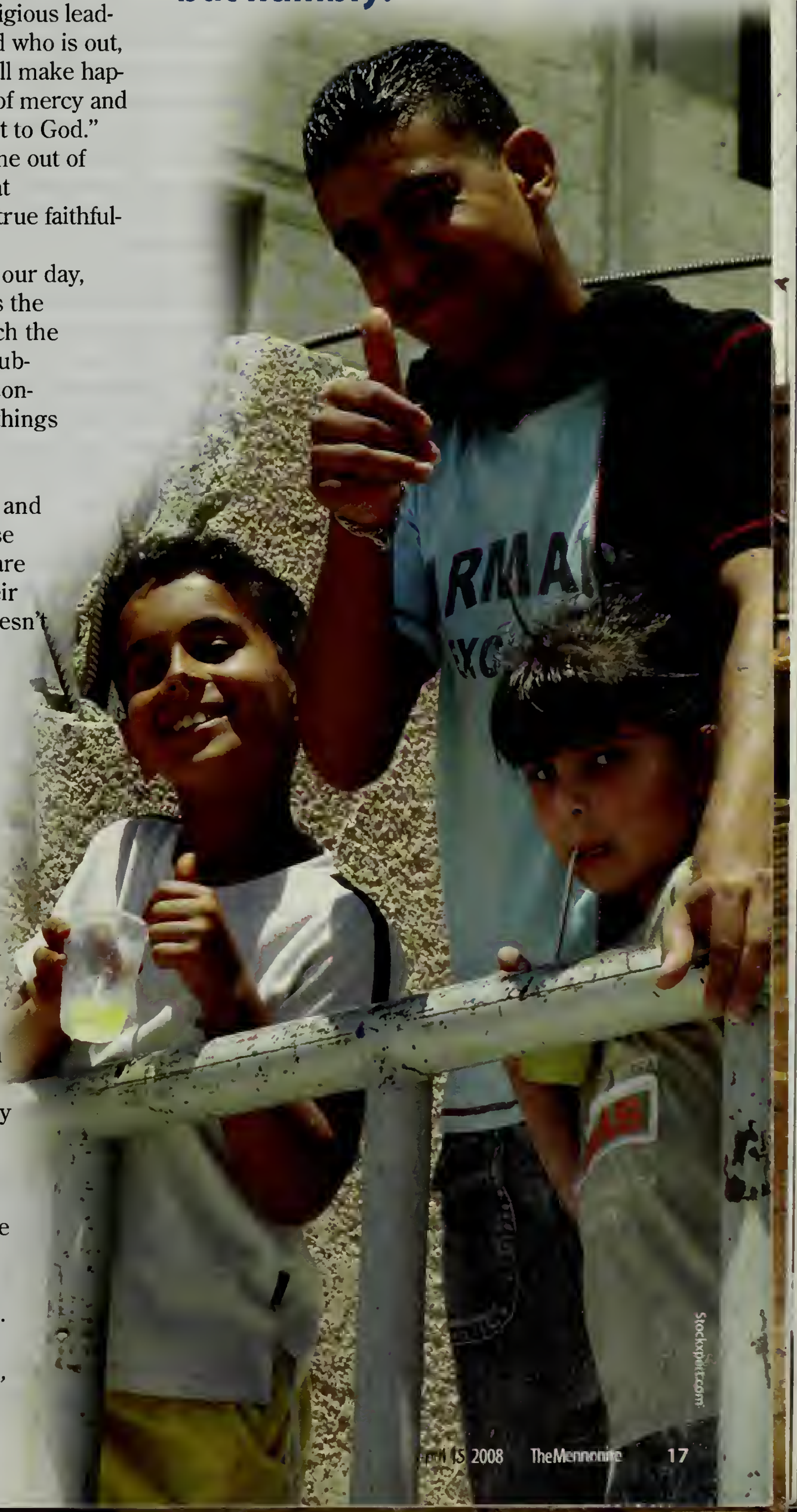
Distributed three times a year as a supplement to *Canadian Mennonite* and *The Mennonite*.

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
574 295-3726
www.ambs.edu

tlemen, think carefully before you punish or exclude people for their religious beliefs. There have been a lot of fanatics who rose up and got people to follow their crazy revolutionary schemes, and their followers all scattered after their leaders were killed." (Those who led by the sword died by the sword, in other words.) Quoting directly: "So in the present case, I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone; because if this plan or this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them—in that case you may even be found fighting against God!"

Our experience and consciousness of value in other people and religious traditions should cause us to hold our convictions firmly but humbly.


Stockxpert.com

This religious and political leader, well steeped in Scripture, prayer and the history of his Jewish people, says to his fellow religious leaders and believers, "It's not up to us to decide who is in and who is out, who is right and who is wrong. It's up to God, and God will make happen what he will in the end, because we believe in a God of mercy and justice and steadfast faithfulness. It's not up to humans but to God." The Sadducees' response to the new Jesus movement came out of fear and jealousy; Gamaliel's came out of his faith. It is that response—to leave the judgment up to God—that shows true faithfulness to God and can show our true Christian faith today.

The challenge of our response to the Jewish people of our day, and to other religions as well—or to no religion at all—is the challenge of Christ to pick up our own crosses and preach the gospel of love. We can be like the Sadducees, sticking stubbornly to our Scriptures and looking for what is "true," convincing ourselves that as long as we check off the right things we believe that we are being faithful people. We can also throw our faith to the winds, being seduced by the way things seem to be, wanting to hang on to our cushy jobs and our secure traditions, not wanting to rock the boat in case somebody gets upset at us. We can give up because we are discouraged by other Christian people who don't see their faith the same as we do, or because sometimes it just doesn't feel right to call ourselves Christian anymore. Or, most authentically, we can live the truth of our faith, like Gamaliel lived his, like the apostles lived theirs, like Jesus exhibited for all of us.

We all know examples of seeing God in people of other traditions and other faiths. Famous ones like Mahatma Gandhi, Thich Nhat Hanh and the Dalai Lama, or not-so-famous ones like our devout Hindu neighbor, our Jewish co-worker working for social justice, or our atheist friend who marches for peace with us in rain or shine. Our experience and consciousness of value in other people and religious traditions should cause us to hold our convictions firmly but humbly.

As John Howard Yoder said, it is impossible for human beings to find some objective ground from which to judge the truth of any particular religious tradition. Our faith is chosen, but it is chosen in a limited space. By experiencing our faith as our conscious response to God working in our lives, we can proclaim Jesus Christ, who has healed our lives with new truth, who leads us to rejoice in the house of God and still have ears to hear the paths of healing and joy that others have trod.

Jeremy Garber attends Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church. This article is adapted from a sermon first given at Mountain Community Mennonite Church in Palmer Lake, Colo., on April 15, 2007.

And no tribe of Joseph

James S. Lederach is a member of Scottdale (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

For most of the last 25 years I am blessed to have participated in a regular, relatively serious Bible study in the context of a Uniform Series Sunday school class at Scottdale (Pa.) Mennonite Church. Although such Bible study has long been out of vogue, to follow the timeless stream of seemingly arbitrarily chosen texts of the Uniform Series (also known as the International Bible Lessons) effectively feeds Bible study as a lifelong avocation. In the course of regular study, moreover, these richest of literary texts serendipitously direct and illuminate our daily lives with the truth about humanity they describe.

Last fall, for example, having just purchased and begun reading *The Beginning of Wisdom: Reading Genesis* by Leon R. Kass, I discovered the Uniform Series had also selected Genesis for consideration. This led me to read the Genesis texts chosen by the Uniform Series in the light of Kass' fresh and penetrating analyses. Our small class considered the meaning of Creation, Cain and Abel, Babel, the Flood and the lives of the Patriarchs, including the Joseph narrative.

Then I read the Nov. 6, 2007, article "Enlisted," in which Jennifer Davis Sensenig explores how Christians should relate to the power of the state. Although her article acknowledged that Christ dealt with such "false powers" by "converting" individuals to faith, Davis advocated also that individuals work to "convert" the powers themselves rather than their personal representatives. In this she was ignoring what Christ expressly rejected as demonic temptation, the exercise of political power in order to convert it to his Father's will.

For these reasons, I found her advocacy of "cultural fluency" to engender "Christian creativity" in relation to the powers unduly sanguine about the possibility of converting those worldly powers without being assimilated and subsumed by them. Moreover, her extolment of Joseph as a paradigm for cultural fluency in relation to the powers was particularly difficult to account for. Imbued with Kass' perspective on the Joseph story, I have another interpretation.

Although the tension between assimilation and separation–of being in the world but not of it–is prominent in both biblical testaments, the theme predominates in the Genesis account of the lives of the Patriarchs of Israel. Survival of the people God first called to the New Way through Abraham depends on them not being co-opted by the pagan political and religious powers of the day. The Joseph narrative, in particular, is a sophisticated exploration of the dangers of assimilation to the ways of Egypt—the most formidable pagan civilization of the day—which portrays Joseph in semi-sinister strokes as the favorite son of Israel become so culturally fluent he has gone over to the "dark," Egyptian side.

Joseph, the interpreter of dreams, is the practitioner of the pagan science of divination. Although he attributes dreams and their interpretation to "the gods," Joseph never acknowledges the God of Israel. By adopting the clean-shaven style of Egyptian dress, he disguises himself from his brothers in order to deceive and threaten them and to trifle with his father. Joseph's scheme for "reorganizing Egypt's economy to mitigate the effects of impending famine" entails not "sustainability and sharing" but economic oppression to effect a total accretion of power to the god/king Pharaoh, who levies without compensation all the produce of the land during plenty and withholds during famine what has been seized to the point all of Egypt must sell themselves as Pharaoh's slaves in order to survive. Joseph does the same for his own family, using his special favor with Pharaoh to entice his family away from the Promised Land and into 400 years of Egyptian slavery. Although his mummified remains are carried out of Egypt with the exodus, no tribe of Israel ever bore the name of Joseph. The children of Israel emerge from Egypt the people of Israel, despite Joseph, not because of him.

That the powers of the world tend to enslave is as true today as in the time of Joseph. That God's will is done despite our fondness of service to the powers is the biblical story from Genesis to Revelation. These lessons of Joseph the Egyptian are particularly well to remember when we are called to alliances with the powers in his name. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Learning from Mary**—Linda Gehman Peachey
- **Putting in fences**—Jane Yoder-Short
- **Is the church the army of God?**—Wally Fahrer

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

CLC responds to Executive Board action

Conference leaders address gender balance and antiracism concerns.

Less than two weeks after the Executive Board (EB) of Mennonite Church USA shared its vision for "a reformed and unified churchwide organization" (see April 1, page 20), the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) had the chance to respond to that vision. That response included questions, uncertainty and some anger.

Meeting March 31-April 2 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa., CLC members heard Mennonite Church USA executive director Jim Schrag say that "we have come to a time when we must re-examine our relationships, behavior and organization." He asked for forgiveness for times when he failed to seek counsel from leaders as he contemplated change.

Ed Diller, moderator-elect and chair of CLC, emphasized that "this is not an event [but] a process." One impetus for the proposed changes, he said, is that congregations are confused about Mennonite Church USA and all the requests that come to them. And such confusion, said Schrag, "is the enemy of our witness."

Elephants dancing: Three "breakout" groups—conference moderators, conference ministers and others—talked about the EB action and interacted with Diller. Reporting the next day (April 1), the moderators said they felt some anxiety and confusion and wanted to be "in the loop, not just told." Dave Hockman-Wert of Pacific Northwest used the image of elephants in the room, dancing.

The conference ministers reported "strong feeling and passion" in their meeting. They affirmed the board's visioning role but not the recommendations. The announcement created "shock and anxiety," and they didn't have the news ahead of time. The EB needs to be aware of how such actions "can push conferences away."

The third group, which wondered if they were "outcasts, misfits or leftovers," looked at the Church Member Profile and wondered how to use the study to address consumerism, militarism and racism, how to articulate our vision of healing and hope. They asked how this affects young adults and racial/ethnic groups.

Tom Kauffman of Ohio, a member of a CLC task force formed in 2005, reported on its work and recommended that its work end, with the assurance that "EB will consult with agencies, conferences and constituency groups in meaningful and ongoing ways as they continue their work."

CLC members expressed worry about whether or not EB will attend to concerns about the role of area conferences. Gordon Oyer of Central District asked if EB affirms that conferences attend to relationships. Schrag said the conferences' role in relating to congregations "cannot be matched."

George O'Reilly of Central Plains said the task force's role is done, but will EB listen? Anita Amstutz of Mountain States said she sensed "a real disunity in the room," that issues of power and trust needed to be addressed.

Schrag recommended monthly phone calls with all the conference ministers to keep the conversation going.

Marlin Birkey of Southeast asked Diller what he would say to the conference ministers.

"We're sorry; please get over it," said Diller. Asked to explain, he said that our society demands perfection, but leadership means making mistakes, and bold leadership will make mistakes. "Express your anger when we do, then move on," he said.

We're sorry; please get over it.
—Ed Diller

'New humanity': CLC vice chair Gay Brunt Miller responded to a concern from last fall's CLC meeting (see Nov. 6, 2007, page 19) about gender balance. Only 20 percent of that meeting's participants were women. She said this meeting had 30 percent women, including nine new women representatives. A committee appointed to review gender balance and racial/ethnic participants in CLC brought a proposed covenant, "Called to be a New Humanity," and table groups responded to it.

The paper included a covenant "to build a CLC council of elders in which at least 30 percent of those at the table are racial/ethnic people." Further, it said, "if we fail to build a council that reflects racial/ethnic justice, those of us who are white males covenant to forfeit enough of our seats to achieve a more just racial/ethnic balance."

Table groups discussed the covenant and reported general support. Several asked about the rationale for 30 percent. Others said that since conferences appoint most of the CLC representatives, changes need to happen there, including mentoring. Some pointed to other exclusionary aspects of CLC, such as economics (meeting on weekdays and for days) and the pattern and style of processing, discernment and decision making. Several white men said they would be willing to give up their seats.

CLC members also heard reports on national identity and health-care access. And they affirmed EB's recommendation of maintaining a two-year cycle for churchwide conventions.

A final table group discussion allowed members to share what is happening in their conferences. The meetings ended with a celebration of Communion.—*Gordon Houser with Anna Groff*

This article is available as a podcast at www.The Mennonite.org

ONLINE

Women in ministry trajectories continue

Zaerr Brenneman provides anecdotal evidence for trends in two surveys.

Can Mennonite pastors who are women "church hop" easier now than before? Yes, according to a survey in which women pastors said it was easier to find a second placement. Fifty-eight percent of women who were pastors reported they found a second placement less than six months after deciding that a move was desired, and 73 percent found one within a year.

Diane Zaerr Brenneman helped place pastors—both men and women—for more than six years as staff person for Mennonite Church USA Congregational and Ministerial Leadership. She left that role in August 2007, and we invited her to reflect on some of the changes she has seen. We also asked her to comment on the trajectories described by the 1992 and 2005 surveys (see box, page 21).

Women are reporting taking no longer than men to find a second placement, says Zaerr Brenneman. The unofficial word in the church 15-20 years ago was, "If you have a position as a woman, you better stay because you might not be able to find another," she says.

Women mistakenly perpetuate the myth that it is more difficult for them to find placements, Zaerr Brenneman says.

"We tend to tell those stories among [women]," she says. In general, congregations are picking the candidate with the strongest qualities and compatibility, she adds.

The theologically placed inner doubts [of women pastors] are healing.—Diane Zaerr Brenneman

For example, some congregations keep the name and sex of a candidate confidential during the beginning pastoral search process. Instead they list the candidate's qualities and could potentially select a pastor who is a woman.

Full-time vs. part-time: There are also more women in full-time positions than in past years but still fewer full-time female pastors than full-time male pastors. By 2005, women in full-time positions increased to 37 percent from 26 percent in 1992.

However, we cannot say the church is less open to women because there are fewer full-time women pastors, says Zaerr Brenneman. In this age, women may be more open to full-time work, she says, but women still tend to choose part-time over men. Forty percent of women said they chose to work part-time over full-time.

Zaerr Brenneman provided examples of three women pastors who negotiated full- or part-time work:

This article is available as a podcast at www.The Mennonite.org

ONLINE

One pastor chose part-time because she has other interests for which she wanted to make time.

Another pastor was half-time, and her congregation wants her to be full-time. But she wants to continue teaching.

A third pastor serves a small congregation who wants a full-time pastor but wasn't paying full-time salary and benefits. She negotiated that the church increase her salary a small amount but continue the increase over the next several years.

Overall, there is an improvement for men and women in leadership to be able to say what they need, Zaerr Brenneman says.

The 2005 survey also showed growth in "inner clarity in women pastors."

This compares the results of a 1992 survey done by Renee Sauder. The 1992 survey showed that women lived with inner ambivalence because they grew up in a culture where women did not hold leadership positions, so having those gifts affirmed in oneself produced inner doubts, Zaerr Brenneman says.

"The theologically placed inner doubts are healing," she says.

Now, Zaerr Brenneman says, women's doubts are similar to those held by men and are externally focused: Will I be able to be a pastor? Can I handle the responsibility? What about my family life?

When it comes to second pastorates, women who want to stay in a certain region for family or other reasons may face difficulties.

Last year, Norma Duerksen decided to end her 14-year ministry at Oak Grove Mennonite Church in Smithville, Ohio, to allow the church to hear a new voice. She then began the process of finding a new pastorate. She wanted to stay in northeast Ohio for her husband's job and faced the reality that few (less than five, she says) churches in that area were open to women pastors.

Duerksen says it is when the men on the list are not available that churches begin to ask, "Why not call a woman?"

Now Duerksen is the lead, half-time pastor at Summit Mennonite Church in Barberton, Ohio. She would have welcomed a full-time position but says working half-time gives her "breathing room" and time to garden.

"If we would've been free to move wherever," Duerksen says, "I don't think finding a pastorate would've been a problem."

Marty Kolb-Wyckoff decided to move from her congregation in Indiana back to eastern Pennsyl-

Diane Zaerr Brenneman

Dorothy Nickel Friesen

Iris de León-Hartshorn

Michelle Armster

Marty Kolb-Wyckoff

vania for family considerations and future retirement. When they moved in 2001, there were openings but limited options in congregations for her as a woman. She became the chaplain at Rockhill Mennonite Community, Sellersville, Pa. While there is still some resistance to women in leadership, there is more openness now, she says.

Sometimes churches simply need time.

"Here in Franconia [Conference]," Kolb-Wyckoff says, "there are a number of women who have gotten into ministry on the condition that they don't preach. But usually in time the congregation becomes open to that."

Another variable in finding second or third pastorates—for both men and women—is experience, says Dorothy Nickel Friesen, conference minister for Western District Conference.

"Congregations will always tip toward the experienced pastors," she says.

Nickel Friesen also notes that Conrad Kanagy's church member profile, *Road Signs for the Journey*, reports that while 49 percent favored the ordination of women in 1989, 67 percent did in 2006.

Nickel Friesen says this attitude shift is profound and hopeful.

"You can't move that much without excellence in pastoring by women," she says. "If we had had disaster after disaster after disaster, those numbers would not have moved in this direction."

Iris de León-Hartshorn, director of intercultural relations for Executive Leadership, says a reason few under-represented racial/ethnic pastors who are women responded to the survey could be because their experiences are different from Anglo pastors who are women.

In the survey, de León-Hartshorn says, some questions were valid and applicable to them and others were not. Also, racial dynamics were not addressed. Women wonder, "Is it because of my gender or because of my race, or a combination?" de León-Hartshorn says.

Also, many under-represented racial/ethnic women serve with their husbands, serve in a conference where they cannot be ordained or are in their first pastorate. So it's difficult for them to answer the questions, she says.

Michelle Armster, co-director of the office on justice and peacebuilding and pastor at St. Andrew Church of Christ, Lancaster, Pa., said that these women couldn't relate to the survey's questions because their vocation is either tied to their spouse's or they have limited options.

Armster said she is an anomaly within under-represented racial/ethnic people—being single and without children. For many other women, dynamics of family responsibilities and roles do not allow moving for a pastorate to be an option.

Overall in the survey, 48 percent of female respondents said balancing pastoral and family responsibilities is one of the three greatest challenges facing women in ministry.

You can't move that much without excellence in pastoring by women. If we had had disaster after disaster . . . those numbers would not have moved in this direction.—Dorothy Nickel Friesen

Despite Armster's singleness, she still knew finding a good fit at a local Mennonite church would prove difficult.

"I knew when I got out of seminary, I had no options within the Mennonite church within this area that would've been for me healthy and honest and faithful," she says.—*Anna Groff*

Women in ministry surveys: 1992 and 2005

Full-time equivalency	Women in 1992 sample	Women in 2005 sample	Men in 2005 sample
Full-time	26 %	37 %	62 %
3/4 time	12 %	19 %	14 %
1/2 time	37 %	31 %	14 %
<1/2 time	25%	13 %	11 %

The 2005 study was administered by Executive Leadership of Mennonite Church USA in partnership with Mennonite Church Canada. Surveys were returned by 169 women (75 percent U.S., 25 percent Canadian) and 129 men (73 percent U.S., 27 percent Canadian). The 1992 study was conducted by Renee Sauder on behalf of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. Sauder was director of women in leadership ministries for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MC).

New support for conference ministers

A team of seven 'denominational ministers' will be led by Gilberto Flores.

Photo provided

Mennonite Church USA denominational ministers, back row (left to right): Linford King, Jorge Vallejos, Iris de León-Hartshorn, Lee Lever; front row (left to right): Phil Bergey, Gilberto Flores, Keith Harder

Tending the souls of conference ministers and tending the system of denominational ministry is the way Gilberto Flores sees his new role in Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership.

Now director of Denominational Ministry and Missional Church for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, Flores moved into this permanent appointment last December. Formerly a denominational minister for Congregational and Ministerial Leadership, Flores heads the same office, but its name has changed to Denominational Ministry.

With the new name comes a new structure that includes seven denominational ministers, rather than four, who oversee relationships with the 21 area conferences of Mennonite Church USA. In addition to giving overall leadership for Denominational Ministry, Flores will also minister to the needs of five area conferences and their conference ministers.

"Gilberto brings pastoral instincts and missional theology and practice to his new role," says Jim Schrag, executive director for Mennonite Church USA. "He has earned respect as a leader and as a spokesperson for new initiatives of learning and witness."

The transition resulted from conversations with and prompting from conference ministers in 2007.

"At the denominational level," Flores says, "we faced the need to recreate ourselves, including a name that suggests we are moving toward a better understanding of who we are. If we are called denominational ministers, then that is what we are. Our intention is to function as the ears of the denomination, to be more care in our leadership and to reflect a missional intention in our name."

The new name, Denominational Ministry, offers a more biblical vocabulary as well as a relational approach. The denominational ministers will expand the work that the Congregational and Ministerial Leadership office was doing in equipping congregational leaders for ministry and supporting conference ministers in their roles.

Denominational ministers will be better able to engage with area conferences through closer, more frequent relationships and discern, for example, when conference leaders need pastoral care.

"If we do what we call 'healthy relationship in healthy systems,'" Flores says, "we will have healthy congregations, healthy conferences and a healthy denomination."

Three new denominational ministers have been appointed who will work to support specific Mennonite Church USA conferences. Phil Bergey will oversee relationships with North Central and Western District. Iris de León-Hartshorn will minister to Illinois and Ohio. Jorge Vallejos is the denominational minister for South Central.

Keith Harder, former director of Congregational and Ministerial Leadership, is currently a denominational minister in addition to leading denominational efforts for a health-care plan for congregational church workers. Other denominational ministers continuing on are Linford King and Lee Lever.—*June Galle Krehbiel for MC USA*

Go ahead –
raise the roof

MMA
Stewardship Solutions

Building a ministry sometimes means new construction. Or maybe a refinanced loan at a lower rate could free more money for your ministry. Either way, we can help.

Check with MMA first if you're thinking about a construction loan, a standard first mortgage loan, or refinancing. You'll find competitive rates, experienced personnel – and no hassles. Plus, your lenders are fellow church members. Another good example of how MMA provides stewardship solutions to the Anabaptist community.

MMA's first mortgage church loan rates:

5-year adjustable rate	**6.25%***
3-year adjustable rate	**5.50%***
1-year adjustable rate	**5.00%***

For a free information kit, contact the church mortgage loan department at (800) 348-7468.

*Rates effective March 1, 2008, and are subject to change on a monthly basis. There will be a 1 percent premium on construction loans during the construction period.

MC USA proposal affects *The Mennonite*

Board chair for The Mennonite, Inc., editor were excluded from meetings.

Sommer

When Susan Sommer, who chairs the board of The Mennonite, Inc., heard about the recommendations of the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA to create one board (see April 1, pages 20-21), she was surprised. If this recommendation is carried out, the board she chairs—along with the agency boards of the denomination—will be dissolved.

In a March 26 interview, she said such a move would be a mistake, though "it will be for the members [of Mennonite Church USA] to decide through their delegates."

Although such a move would affect The Mennonite, Inc., which is an entity, not an agency, of the denomination, neither she nor editor Everett Thomas were invited to the March 16-17 meeting where moderator Sharon Waltner and moderator-elect Ed Diller shared the recommendations with the executive directors and board chairs of Mennonite Church USA's agencies.

The recommendations then went to the Constituency Leaders Council (see story, page 19), where The Mennonite, Inc., also was not represented. In June, all boards (including The Mennonite, Inc.) will meet in Columbus, Ohio, for further discussion.

"*The Mennonite* is owned by members of Mennonite Church USA, who share a common Confession of Faith," said Sommer. "Within the membership there is a varied history—one as old as the Reformation and as young as yesterday." In such a membership there will be differences of opinion, she went on, and "somewhere in the mix of opinion, truth exists. I think Jesus gave us the 'where two or three are gathered' rule so we would hear these differences in order to learn the truth. The delegates understood this when they asked for some separation between the magazine and Mennonite Church USA leadership, making *The Mennonite* an entity rather than an agency—exactly so its reporting would be free to note differences."

Thomas declined to comment on the proposed restructuring but noted that the purposes assigned to *The Mennonite* by Mennonite Church USA bylaws remain unchanged.

"I learned early in this role," Thomas said, "that some want *The Mennonite* to be more closely controlled by Mennonite Church USA leaders and some want us to have greater distance from those same leaders. We have tried, however, to stay somewhere near the middle, between the two polarities. The tension this creates is not a problem to be solved but a dynamic to be managed."

As discussions continue, Sommer said, the magazine will operate as it has. "The board has given the editor freedom to write what he wishes in the editorials in *The Mennonite*," she said, and the editor's point of view "may not be identical to the point of view held by the board of directors for The Mennonite, Inc."—*Gordon Houser*

Sales: Insurance and financial services

Combine your professional skills and your Christian faith values

MMA®

Stewardship Solutions

MMA, an established, church-related organization, is seeking sales professionals to provide insurance and financial solutions to one of the industry's most loyal markets.

MMA is a highly trusted organization serving individuals and businesses primarily associated with Mennonite and other Anabaptist-related denominations. Excellent income potential and generous benefits. To learn more, visit www.mma-online.org/careers. Fax or e-mail resume to (574) 537-6635 or hr@mma-online.org.

Local people serving the insurance needs of Mennonites and Brethren in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

For information about home, auto, farm, church, or business insurance find a local Goodville agent at goodville.com or 1-800-448-4622.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

CALENDAR

3rd annual, Idaho Mennonite World Relief Festival on May 17 at the College Church of the Nazarene on 504 E. Dewey St., **Nampa, Idaho.**

Staunton Mennonite Church, Staunton, Va., celebrates 50 years in 2008. Friends and former attendees are invited to an anniversary celebration May 18; staunton-mennonitechurch.net or kzendt@comcast.net

75th anniversary celebration for **Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City, Ohio**, June 21-22. Call 614-873-8290 or email sharonmenno@yahoo.com for details.

Southern Africa Reunion for alumni of Mennonite Central Committee and mission agencies; July 25-27, 2008, **Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.**; contact Norma Johnson at 316-283-4018.

WORKERS

Shantz, Tamara, was licensed on March 23 at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., for her work as assistant campus pastor at Goshen College.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bemiller, Jacob Mark, March 14, to Lucas and Natasha Ramer Bemiller, Elkhart, Ind.

Benin, Ella Catherine, Feb. 7, to Matt and Heather Brubaker Benin, Harrisonburg, Va.

Boshart, Holdern Christopher, Feb. 28, to Chris and Michelle Walker Boshart, Wayland, Iowa.

Domer, Taylor Reese, Jan. 18, to James and Crista Wittmer Domer, Hartville, Ohio.

Dunckel, Ian Shepherd, Feb. 29, to Thomas and Leann Lyndaker Dunckel, Lowville, N.Y.

Farrough, Ella Louise, Feb. 21, to Peter and Amal Friesen Farrough, South Bend, Ind.

Helmuth, Anna Miriam, March 20, to Patrick Helmuth and Amy Glick, Orrville, Ohio.

Howard, DaeAnna Tashawn, Jan. 16, to DeShawn and Toshina Nicole Martin Howard, Elkhart, Ind.

Krehbiel, Griffin Ezekiel, Feb. 24, to Travis Krehbiel and Carrie Hochstetler, Newton, Kan.

Luitjens, Tristan Joshua, Feb. 25, to Nathan and Rachelle Patmore Luitjens, Wayland, Iowa.

Manchester, Elijah Paul, March 17, to Matthew and Emily Bontrager Manchester, Canton, Ohio.

McLaughlin, Claire Elizabeth, March 11, to Sean and Julie Wagler McLaughlin, North Canton, Ohio.

Meyer, Morgan Lee, Feb. 12, to Tim Meyer and Michelle Reid, Wayland, Iowa.

Nolt, Jordan Travis, March 30, to Ryan and Pat Dehoff Nolt, Ephrata, Pa.

Ortman, Solomon Gary, March 19, to William and Sherilyn Graber Ortman, Marion, S.D.

Plett, Kjartan Adam, Feb. 8, to Artur and Francesca Schwing Plett, Indianapolis.

Ramer, Amelia Christine, March 19, to Chad and Christine Short Ramer, Elkhart, Ind.

Roth, Rajan Avery, Feb. 20, to Tracy and Holly Kaila Roth, Wayland, Iowa.

Schrock, Kiley Esther, March 4, to Brent and Andrea Miller Schrock, Hartville, Ohio.

Springer, Brett Roger, March 14, to Ross and Amy Springer, Goshen, Ind.

Sommers, Brady Adam, Feb. 8, to Kerry and Faith Raber Sommers, Uniontown, Ohio.

Stutzman, Jessica Ann, March 13, to Michael and Michele Mast Stutzman, Sarasota, Fla.

Stutzman, Silas John Epp, Feb. 15, to Karl N. and Twilla Epp Stutzman, Elkhart, Ind.

Unruh, Kai Kui-Lin, Feb. 24, to Kent Unruh and Jeanette Lim, Seattle, Wash.

Vasey, Ethan Matthew, March 13, to Joshua and Traci Detwiler Vasey, Pennsburg, Pa.

West, Nicholas Steven, to Bret and Ronda Leichty West, Wayland, Iowa.

Yoder, Caroline Grace, March 25, to Brent and Rachel Hoffman Yoder, Jacksonville, Ill.

Yoder Rupp, Caitlin Hope, Feb. 29, to Jason and Tonya Yoder Rupp, Harrisonburg, Va.

MARRIAGES

Conder/Wood: Jennifer Conder, Denver, Colo., and Keith Wood, Denver, March 15 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Froese/Sharp: Brenton Froese, Inman, Kan., and Laura Sharp, Tupelo, Miss., March 22 at Harrisburg Baptist Church, Tupelo.

DEATHS

Bergthold, Reuben Henry, 94, Reedley, Calif., died March 13. Spouse: Hildur Ahlstrom Bergthold (deceased). Parents: Henry and Marie Mueller Bergthold. Children: Aleta Rempel, Bruce, Dean; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 17 at Reedley Cemetery.

Opportunities for psychiatrists in a faith-based environment

Oaklawn, a major mental health provider in the midwest, seeks both a child and adolescent psychiatrist and an adult psychiatrist to join our multidisciplinary staff.

- Located in Goshen, Indiana, a mid-sized rural community
- Two hours from Chicago and three hours from Indianapolis
- Community offers a cost of living 17.6% below national average
- Faith-based heritage; sponsored by Mennonite Health Services Alliance
- Competitive salary, RVU-based incentive, signing bonus, relocation expense, student loan forgiveness
- Call of 1:6 weekends and one weekday every two weeks

To learn about Oaklawn, visit our web site at www.oaklawn.org.
For more information about these positions, contact Human Resources at 1-800-282-0809, ext. 675. All inquiries kept confidential.

OAKLAWN
Toward Health and Wholeness
330 Lakeview Drive, PO Box 809
Goshen, Indiana 46527

Boshart, Dennis Lloyd, 91, Goshen, Ind., died March 12. Spouse: Esther Wagler Boshart. Parents: Elmer T. and Martha Nebel Boshart. Children: Wesley, Ronald, Rodney, Peggy Milton; 11 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 16 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.

Brady, Christine Lynn Butts, 55, Reedley, Calif., died March 1 of cancer. Spouse: Chris Brady. Parents: Merle Richard and Madie Neufeld Butts. Children: Kelly, Ann Aceves, Katie; two grandchildren. Funeral: March 11 at Sierra View Homes, Reedley.

David, Jennie Howard, 90, Harrisonburg, Va., died Feb. 19 of a heart attack. Spouse: Abraham David. Parents: Rev. and Mrs. William Howard. Funeral: March 12 at Detwiler Auditorium, Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg.

Dyck, Martha Harder, 98, Normal, Ill., died Feb. 8 of congestive heart failure and a stroke. Spouse: L. Paul Suderman (deceased). Spouse: Walter Henry Dyck (deceased). Parents: Gustov A. and Anna Wiebe Harder. Children: Delores Ann Suderman Bartel, Charles Suderman, Gordon R. Dyck, Evelyn A. Dyck Bertsche, Gerald P. Dyck; 13 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16 at Mennonite Church of Normal.

Gehman, Paul S., 90, Souderton, Pa., died March 16. Spouse: Sallie Kulp Gehman (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Mary Strouse Gehman. Children: Ivan, Leora Gehman, Clara Seaman, Sallie Halteman, Karen Hessler, Ernest; five grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 22 at Souderton Mennonite Homes, Souderton, Pa.

Hochstetler, Donald James, 80, Kalona, Iowa, died March 27. Spouse: Marvel Kinsinger Hochstetler. Parents: Earl and Mary Krabill Hochstetler. Children: Becky Yoder, Barbara Fentress, Brent, Dave; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 1 at Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church, Kalona.

Horst, Aden H., 87, Columbus, Ohio, died March 13. Spouse: Mary Edith Troyer Horst. Parents: Clarence and Nannie B. Horst. Children: Mardene Kelley, Ruth Stoltzfus, Anita Horst, Janet Miller; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: March 15 at Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Hurst, Paul R., 63, Lancaster, Pa., died March 13 following a three-month battle with cancer. Spouse: Louetta Weaver Hurst. Parents: Luke Auker and Sallye Rhodes Hurst. Children: Chad, Troy, Tia Hurst Straub; nine grandchildren. Memorial service: March 19 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Irwin, Diane R., 42, Germantown Hills, Ill., died March 3. Parents: William D. and Norma J. Kenagy Irwin. Funeral: March 16 at Cazenovia Mennonite Church, Cazenovia, Ill.

Janzen, John, 94, Mountain Lake, Minn., died March 20. Spouse: Elvira Klassen Janzen (deceased). Spouse: Iva Lawrence Janzen (deceased). Parents: Peter F. and Elisabeth Klassen Janzen. Children: Jack, Deb Shoptaugh, Jerry; five grandchildren. Funeral: March 26 at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake.

Kauffman, Clair S., 88, West Liberty, Ohio, died March 4. Spouse: D. Roselle Yoder Kauffman. Parents: Noah S. and Katie Burkholder Kauffman. Child: Nedra Fay Fredick; two grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 16 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Kephart, Avis Hochstetler, B7, Chesapeake, Va., died March 22. Spouse: Harold J. Kephart (deceased). Parents: Emory J. and Nettie Wengerd Hochstetler. Children: Richard, Michael, Sharon K. Goudy, Jerry, Linda; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at Mt. Pleasant Mennonite Church, Chesapeake.

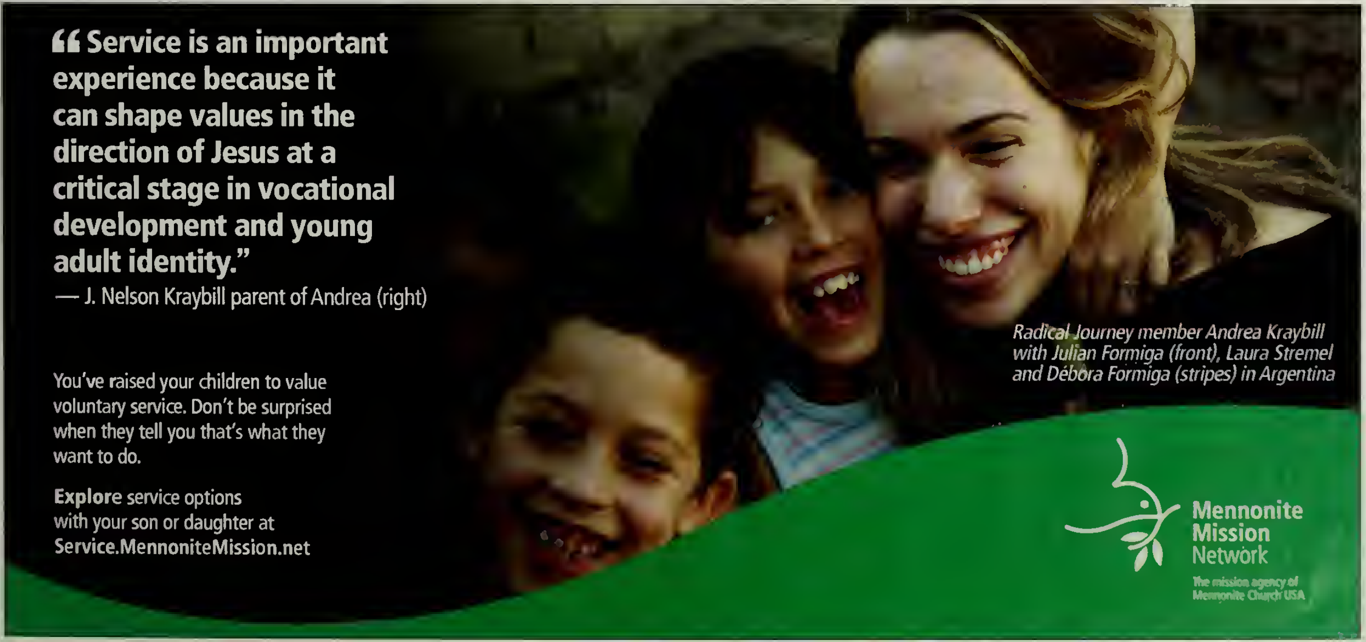
Kolb, Robert "Bob" Clair, 89, Springs, Pa., died March 27. Spouse: Esther May Wenger Kolb. Spouse: Edwin and Elva Gelnett Kolb. Children: Frederic, Nancy White; three grandchildren. Funeral: March 30 at Springs Mennonite Church.

Leatherman, Willis Swartz, 94, Bedminster, Pa., died March 9. Spouse: Edith Rush Leatherman (deceased). Spouse: Pearl A. Greiser Leatherman (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Ella Swartz Leatherman. Children: Edward L. Leatherman, Alrin M. Leatherman, Gerald M. Leatherman, Mary Ann Lear, Doris Leatherman, Linwood Leatherman, Jacob Landis, Ruth Weaver, Arlene Nase, Marvin Landis, Alice Rush; 13 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 15 at Souderton Mennonite Homes, Souderton, Pa.

Leichty, Ruby Troyer, 95, Leo, Ind., died March 10. Spouse: Noah Leichty (deceased). Parents: Jeptha "Jeff" and Ada Troyer. Children: Donald, Sarah Witherow, Janet Brindle; seven grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 14 at North Leo Mennonite Church.

Martin, J. Leon, 85, Goshen, Ind., died March 6. Spouse: Katharine S. Martin. Parents: Ira and Mary Eshleman Martin. Children: Carolyn Nissley-Martin, Arlon G., John L., Darrell S., Wayne D.; 15 grandchildren. Funeral: March 8 Rieth-Rohrer-Ehret Funeral Home, Goshen.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.


"Service is an important experience because it can shape values in the direction of Jesus at a critical stage in vocational development and young adult identity."
— J. Nelson Kraybill parent of Andrea (right)

You've raised your children to value voluntary service. Don't be surprised when they tell you that's what they want to do.

Explore service options with your son or daughter at **Service.MennoniteMission.net**

Radical Journey member Andrea Kraybill with Julian Formiga (front), Laura Stremel and Débora Formiga (stripes) in Argentina

Mennonite Mission Network
The mission agency of Mennonite Church USA

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

McDowell, S. Esther Beechy, 95, Goshen, Ind., died March 6, Spouse: Wiley McDowell. Parents: W.A. and Mary Hostetler Beechy. Children: Barbara Smucker, John E.; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 17 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen.

Miller, Carrie Sauder, 96, Archbold, Ohio, died March 26. Spouse: Martin J. Miller (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Katie Nofziger Sauder. Children: Richard, Robert, Jerry, Annabelle Carlin, Doris Eberly, Linda Howard; 16 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Miller, Leo Edwin, 82, Kalona, Iowa, died March 8. Spouse: Darlene Brenneman Miller. Parents: Milo and Lizzie Kempf Miller. Children: Wendell, Eileen Sawatsky, Merlin, Julia Truex; nine grandchildren. Funeral: March 12 at Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church, Kalona.

Miller, Lois Marguerite Steckly, 81, Wellman, Iowa, died March 26. Spouse: Willis R. Miller. Parents: Enos and Amy Hershberger Steckly. Children: James R., John C., Lowell A., Lois Ann Dehogues, Warren Ray; six grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Wellman Mennonite Church.

Moyers, Mary Elizabeth Brunk, 94, Broadway, Va., died Feb. 23 of heart failure. Spouse: Preston Elsworth Moyers (deceased). Parents: Elmer R. and Nannie Blosser Brunk. Child: Randall L., two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 26 at Trissels Mennonite Church, Broadway.

Nofziger, Lois M. Nafziger, 84, Archbold, Ohio, died March 20. Spouse: Kenneth Nofziger (deceased). Parents: William II and Ruth Frey Nafziger. Children: Keith, Pat Nofziger, LuAnne Ashliman, Steve, Sam; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 26 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Richard, Clysta Ann, 77, Des Moines, Iowa, died March 23. Parents: Noah and Anna Graber Richard. Funeral: March 29 at Des Moines Mennonite Church.

Roth, Bernice Barbara Steckly, 89, Wayland, Iowa, died Jan. 1 following a lengthy illness. Spouse: Gilbert F. Roth (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Lydia Leichty Steckly. Children: Lynn G., Roderick, Karen Swartzendruber; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 5 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Sommers, Susie Keim, 85, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 7. Spouse: Wayne Sommers. Parents: Abe and Susan Troyer Keim . Children: Wayne Arlee, Darrel, Dallas, Lorraine Reinford, Fern Delagrange; 14 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 10 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Stroup, Ruth Elizabeth Miller, 84, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 25. Spouse: Howard A. Stroup (deceased). Parents: Simon J. and Lydia Bender Miller. Children: David, Laura Batten, Joyce E. Stroup, Kevin J.; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 1 at Chapel Hill Funeral Home, Osceola, Ind.

Stucky, Virginia Ann Toevs, 77, Moundridge, Kan., died March 14. Spouse: Dwight Dale Stucky (deceased). Parents: Jake E. and Anna Mackey Toevs. Children: Sylvia Verbeck, Bruce, Monte; five grandchildren. Funeral: March 17 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.

Swarm, Mary Ann Fergison, 97, Goshen, Ind., died March 6. Spouse: Herbert S. Swarm (deceased). Children: Herbert E., Alice Conley, Ruby Jean Veatch. Funeral: March 8 at Rieth-Rohrer-Ehret-Lienhart Funeral Home, Wakarusa, Ind.

Thompson, Peggy Boshart, 61, Colorado Springs, Colo., died March 3 of cancer treatment complications. Parents: Clarence and Ida Belle Zook Boshart. Children: Robert, Rudy, Zonn; six grandchildren. Funeral: March 14 at Living Springs Worship Center, Colorado Springs.

Tschetter, Melvin C., 74, Freeman, S.D., died March 3 of cancer. Spouse: LaVonne Hofer Tschetter. Parents: Paul P. and Barbara J. Gross Tschetter. Children: Darnell, Melva Jean, Darla LaJean; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 6 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Yoder, Doris J. Reber, 81, Kalona, Iowa, died Feb. 19. Spouse: Marion Tex Yoder. Parents: Willis and Mary Phend Reber. Children: Marla Yoder, Mary Yoder, June Yoder, Julie Yoder, Morgan Yoder. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church, Kalona.

Staff Reunion
for all former staff and board members of Highland Retreat
Help celebrate!
50 years! Highland Retreat
June 20-22, 2008
Weekend of the Annual Steak BBQ
For information or to register contact:
www.highlandretreat.org
info@highlandretreat.org – 540-852-3226

Good work...*advanced.*
Gateway Woods Apostolic Christian Children's Home (Leo, IN) contracted with AAI for a fundraising initiative.
ADVANCEMENT Associates
866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com
Becky Drumm *Principal*
Rich Gerig *Principal*
Mike Wiese, Dan Hess & Sherilyn Ortman, *Associates*
Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

Eastern Mennonite University is seeking applicants for the position of ***director of Summer Peacebuilding Institute*** (SPI) at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding (CJP). This full-time position is responsible for the planning, implementation, funding and evaluation of SPI as well as supervising SPI staff and coordinating SPI instructors and outside speakers. The selected individual will facilitate relationship building and development (program and financial) with a variety of outside constituencies, both domestic and international. Master's degree in conflict transformation or related field. Strong theoretical and practical background working in communication and relational skills. Experience in cross-cultural and interreligious settings. Experience with and/or familiarity with Mennonite-related organizations, international NGOs, U.S.-based non-profit organizations, government and multinational organizations preferred. Strong commitment to nonviolent transformation of conflict. Other essential skills include a commitment to EMU's mission and philosophy as a Christian higher-education institution. Applications will be reviewed immediately and will be open until filled. For more information/requirements please visit our Web site at www.emu.edu. Send letter of application, resumé and three professional references to: Human Resources Office, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, or hr@emu.edu. People who bring diversity are encouraged to apply. EMU is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

The Lowville Mennonite Church, Lowville, N.Y., is seeking an ***associate pastor*** to assist in developing a congregation of 298 members and children. The successful candidate will have the gifts and calling for youth and young adults, administration, counseling and problem solving. LMC is a Christ-centered congregation seeking to serve our community and make our Anabaptist/Mennonite faith relevant and authentic in the 21st Century. Compensation is commensurate with qualifications and experience. Visit us at www.lowvillemennonite.org. Contact the pastor search committee via email at marzedos@yahoo.com.

Executive director, **Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center**. Position available for ***full-time executive director*** for year-round retreat center/campground in southeast Virginia. Responsibilities include overall administration and visionary leadership. Send resumé or inquiries no later than April 26 to: Jay Hulsey, 8226 Ellerson Green Place, Mechanicsville, VA 23116; email to james.hulsey@verizon.net.

Western Mennonite School, Salem Oregon; positions beginning August 2008.

High school social science teacher: Full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred with a major in social science. Licensed in or be able to be licensed in Oregon.

High school Spanish teacher. Full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred, with a major in Spanish. Licensed or be able to be licensed in Oregon. Application closing date for both the above positions: April 18, 2008. Contact Darrel Camp at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or dcamp@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Dorm leaders. 10-month, full-time position. Western seeks both male and female candidates to serve as dorm leaders for its high school dorm program. Experience working with youth preferred. Responsibilities include mentoring students, enforcing rules, planning and supervising activities. Candidates must be willing to work with students from other cultures, promote a positive Christ-centered community and be willing to work flexible hours. Applications accepted until positions filled. Contact Zig Derochowski at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or zderochowski@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Celebrate fitness! If you are 50 or older, participate in the sixth ***Mennonite Sports and Fitness Classic*** sponsored by MARP and MMA at Goshen College June 26-28. For a brochure, go to http://marp.mennonite.net/. Register soon and save $10.

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"I work to position my teaching on the line between church and culture so that my students understand the resources of the church and are able to use these resources to engage the world. I hope my students can recognize in me, and in my teaching, something that is both faithful and intelligible and able to serve the various cultures that they inhabit."

– Trevor Bechtel, assistant professor of religion

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

The department of nursing at **Goshen College** in Goshen, Ind., is looking to fill two nursing faculty positions. The first position is a ***full-time gerontology and medical-surgical nursing position*** in classroom, simulated laboratory and clinical settings. Second position is in conjunction with Goshen Health System seeking to fill a ***faculty and clinical nursing research position***. Duties include classroom teaching at the undergraduate and graduate level for Goshen College and clinical nursing research at Goshen Health System. Doctorate in nursing is required. The ideal candidate will bring to the job significant experience in nursing research, nursing education and nursing practice. To apply: Visit the position announcements at www.goshen.edu/employment. Goshen College and Goshen Health System are each committed to the development of a diverse workforce.

Lititz Area Mennonite School, a K-8 Christian School, serving 295 students is seeking a candidate who will work on ***fund-raising, donor relations, student recruitment and public relations***. Candidate must have a passion for Christian education and excellent communication and relational skills. Bachelor's degree in education or related field preferred. Qualified individuals should send resumé to: Lititz Area Mennonite School, Ken Frey, 1050 East Newport Road, Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-9551; lams3@dejazzd.com.

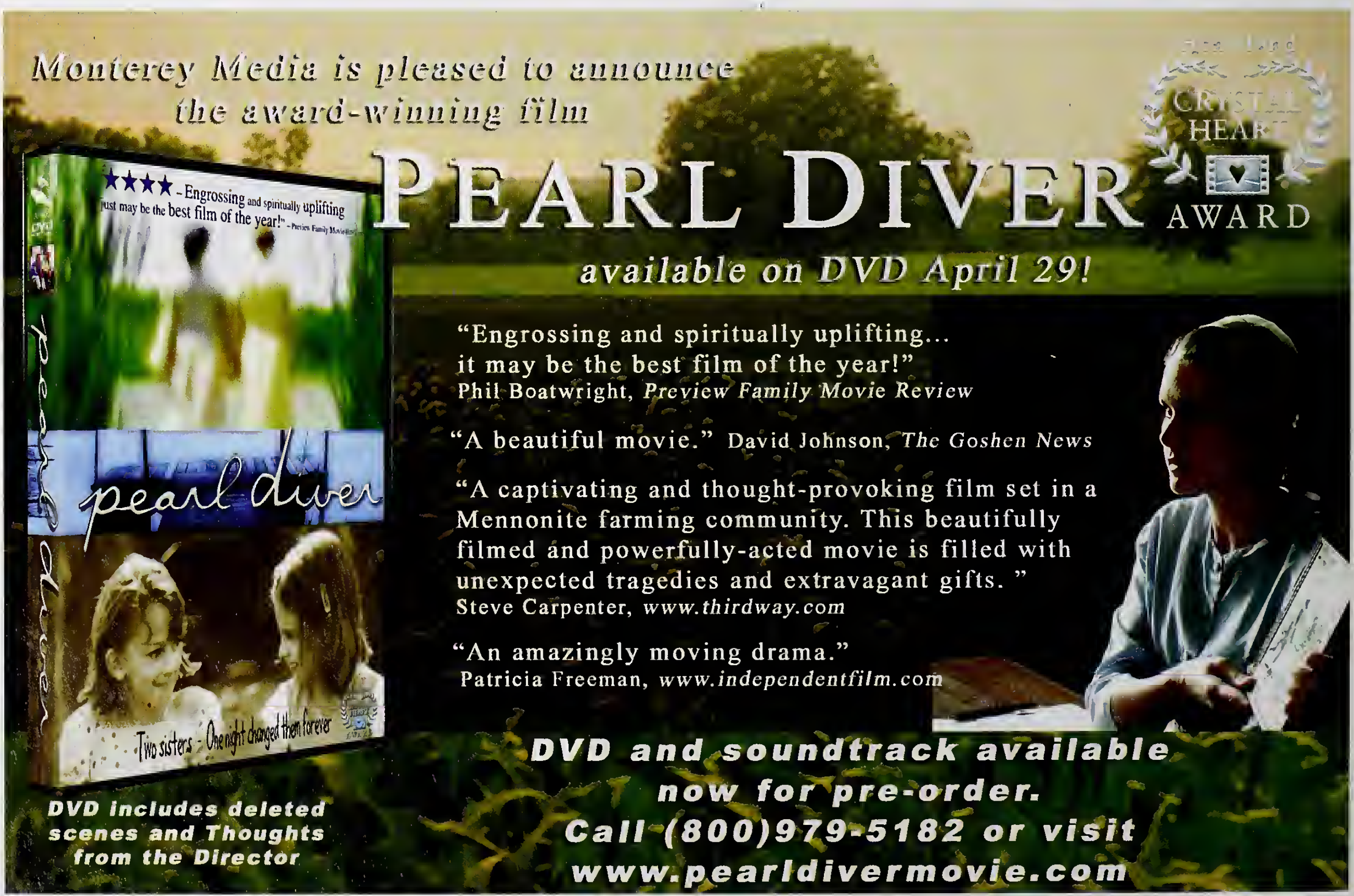
Hesston College seeks a ***development officer*** for Midwest region as member of team responsible for fund-raising for annual fund, capital campaigns and endowment; includes additional strategic focus with young alumni. Qualifications include integrity, relational skills, marketing mentality, passion for the mission of Hesston College and knowledge of Mennonite Church USA. Preferred background in successful fund-raising and/or marketing with bachelor's degree in relevant field. Reports to the VP of Development. Send resumé and letter of interest to Yvonne Sieber, VP of Development, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062, or email yvonnes@hesston.edu. EOE.

Service Adventure needs ***unit leaders*** in Johnstown, Pa., Philippi, W.V., and Raleigh, N.C. Leaders should be at least 24 years old, and will minister with young adults (age17-20) as you live in community and serve the local community and church. Visit our Web site at Service.MennoniteMission.net and follow the Service Adventure links, call toll-free at 1-866-866-2872, or email Service@MennoniteMission.net.

First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, seeks ***full-time associate pastor of youth ministries and pastoral care*** with start date November 2008 or later. Women and minorities encouraged to apply. Please contact IN-MI Conference Minister Tim Lichti (tim@im.mennonite.net) for information.

Goshen College, Goshen, Ind., is seeking a ***director of the student wellness and health center*** with duties set to begin August 2008. The applicant should be a Certified Nurse Practitioner and a graduate of an accredited advanced practice/nurse practitioner program. The primary duties and responsibilities are: provide clinical services to students; administer the operations of the center; and provide support for international programs. Three years experience in a health setting preferred. Goshen College is a small (about 1000 students), liberal arts institution affiliated with the Mennonite Church. Goshen, Ind., is located in northern Indiana about 30 minutes from South Bend, Ind., and about 2 1/2 hours east of Chicago. To apply, please visit http://www.goshen.edu/employment. Goshen College is an affirmative action employer.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.


★★★★ – Engrossing and spiritually uplifting just may be the best film of the year!" – Preview Family Movie Review
DVD
pearl diver
Two sisters - One night changed them forever
CRYSTAL HEART AWARD

Monterey Media is pleased to announce the award-winning film

PEARL DIVER

available on DVD April 29!

"Engrossing and spiritually uplifting...
it may be the best film of the year!"
Phil Boatwright, *Preview Family Movie Review*

"A beautiful movie." David Johnson, *The Goshen News*

"A captivating and thought-provoking film set in a Mennonite farming community. This beautifully filmed and powerfully-acted movie is filled with unexpected tragedies and extravagant gifts."
Steve Carpenter, *www.thirdway.com*

"An amazingly moving drama."
Patricia Freeman, *www.independentfilm.com*

DVD includes deleted scenes and Thoughts from the Director

DVD and soundtrack available now for pre-order. Call (800)979-5182 or visit www.pearldivermovie.com

Bethany Christian Schools (gr. 6-12; enrollment 285) invites applications for 2008-09 for three teaching positions: ***sixth grade teacher*** (self-contained class), ***7 and 8 mathematics teacher***, and ***chemistry and physics teacher*** (high school). Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure. To apply, submit a resumé and letter of application to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499. Phone: 574-534-2567; email: akdueck@bethanycs.net.

The **Salem Mennonite Church**, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alberta, (45 minutes Southeast of Edmonton) is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, Alberta T0B 4J0; Fax: 780-662-0106; email salemchurch@live.ca.

Additional positions open at **Western Mennonite School**:

Applications for the first two positions are open until Aug. 1, 2008 or until the position is filled. ***Food services director***: 10-month, full-time position, beginning August. Responsible for preparing daily menus and meals that adhere to state and federal guidelines for daily nutritional needs; managing the food services program; training and supervising food services staff; and coordinating, as necessary, food for special occasions and functions. Must hold, or be able to get, an Oregon Food Handler's license. Contact Pat Rausch at 503-363-2000 or prausch@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Dorm director: 10-month, full-time position. Western seeks a candidate to serve as dorm director for its high school dorm program, beginning August. Must be willing to work with and enjoy students from other cultures, promote a positive Christ-centered community, and lead others by being a positive role model. Responsibilities include mentoring dorm staff and students, enforcing rules, planning and supervising activities. Management experience preferred. Contact Zig Derochowski at 503-363-2000 or zderochowski@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Applications for the following position are open until May 12 or until the position is filled.

Western seeks an ***alumni relations coordinator***, beginning June, to help strengthen Western's alumni and friends network. Responsibilities include organizing fun and effective events and assisting in the development of communications including the development and updating of Western's online community. The coordinator will work with a team to cultivate relationships among alumni and friends to encourage their involvement in the school's Christ-centered mission. The ideal candidate will be a positive, high-energy team leader with superior oral and written communication skills, proficient knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet and database software with ability to manage multiple projects and organize events. Western alum preferred. Contact Andrea Wall at 503-363-2000 or adwall@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Western Mennonite School, established in 1945, offers grades 6-12 to local students and students from around the world. Located on 45 acres in Oregon's Willamette Valley, Western offers a strong academic and faith-building experience. Western seeks exceptional candidates with a heart for youth and sharing Christ.

***Executive director.* Menno-Hof** in Shipshewana, Ind., is a vibrant Amish/Mennonite interpretive center celebrating 20 years of successful operation. Looking for an executive director to exhibit creativity and work with the board of directors to expand and refine vision for the future. Desired qualifications: strong knowledge of the Anabaptist faith tradition; ability to communicate issues of faith and culture passionately. Complete job description at www.mennohof.org. Send resumés or inquiries to Leanne Farmwald, c/o Menno-Hof, 510 S. Van Buren St., Shipshewana, IN 46565 or lfarmwald@aol.com.

Bethany Birches Camp seeks ***counselors*** for the coming summer. Youth between the ages of 18 and 24 should apply. June 14–Aug. 9. This is a paid position. See www.vtchildrenscamp.com for more details and applications or contact Brandon Bergey at 802-672-5220.

Western Mennonite School, Salem Oregon; position beginning immediately. ***Bookkeeping assistant***. Part-time. This hourly position is responsible for accounts payable, check reconciliation, quarterlies and payroll. Will assist in general ledger, preparing budgets and other assistance as needed. Qualifications include three years bookkeeping with fund accounting experience; prefer a degree in accounting. Application closing date: April 18, 2008. Contact Pat Rausch at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378 or prausch@westernmennoniteschool.org. Western Mennonite School, established in 1945, offers grades 6-12 to local students and students from around the world. Located on 45 acres in Oregon's Willamette Valley, Western offers a strong academic and faith-building experience. Western seeks exceptional candidates with a heart for youth and sharing Christ.

Shuffleboard

Retirement is not all fun and games – it can be fun work.

Our free booklet, *Your enough,* can help you plan for a constructive retirement. Call us or visit our Web site today for your copy. Build something special.

(800) 348-7468, Ext. 202
www.mma-online.org

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

© 2007 Mennonite Mutual Aid

Human Smoke, following Jesus, science

Gordon Houser

Despite predictions of their demise, books continue to proliferate, and many of them are well-worth reading.

Human Smoke: The Beginnings of World War II, the End of Civilization by Nicholson Baker (Simon & Schuster, 2008, $30) is made up of short (usually two to a page) accounts from primary sources—newspapers, diaries, memoirs, magazine articles, public proclamations and speeches—in chronological order, from August 1892 to Dec. 31, 1941 (the last two-thirds of the book cover 1940-41). World War II is often called "the good war," but was it? Baker asks, "Did waging it help anyone who needed help?" The book leaves many impressions. Here are a few:

- World War II did not come out of nowhere;
- various companies sold military planes to Germany;
- Hitler's actions against Jews was well-known but largely ignored, partly because he was so anti-Communist;
- Churchill was vicious; he wanted to use mustard gas from planes on Iraqis in 1920;
- Franklin D. Roosevelt was anti-Semitic (as was Churchill);
- U.S. military buildup in the Pacific alarmed Japan from back in 1934;
- Lockheed sold bombers to Japan;
- a plan by German generals to overthrow Hitler in August 1938 was averted when Neville Chamberlain signed over Czechoslovakia to Hitler;
- British bombers hit not more than 1 percent of their targets, and only 20 percent dropped their bombs within 75 square miles of their assigned target;
- in 1925, "most of the world was pacifist."

The book also raises parallels to today. Fear of the enemy continues to be used, as it was then, to remove civil liberties as well as freedom of speech and of the press. It helps us gain a clearer sense of what led up to World War II, and it calls us to learn from the perils of glamorizing war.

FILMS

City of Men (Cidade dos Homens) (R) is a Brazilian film about the longing for fathers. It follows best buddies Acerola and Laranjinha, about to turn 18, as they discover things about their missing fathers' pasts that will shatter their solid friendship. This plays out in the middle of a war between rival drug gangs from Rio's favelas. The film takes you into these young lives and helps you feel the claustrophobia of the winding streets and paths. While the message and the plot lack subtlety, the winsome actors and the narrative pace carry the film.

Following Jesus: Quite a few books address how to be faithful disciples. *The Words of Jesus: A Gospel of the Sayings of Our Lord* with reflections by Phyllis Tickle (Jossey-Bass, 2008, $22.95) collects Jesus' sayings under such headings as public teaching, private instruction, healing dialogue, intimate conversation and post-Resurrection encounters. Tickle, a longtime religion writer, reflects on the impact of facing Jesus' words directly. She writes: "We have become lost in a wilderness of scholarship that forgot to bring faith and humility along for the trek."

The New Friars: The Emerging Movement Serving the World's Poor by Scott A. Bessenecker (IVP Books, 2006, $15) profiles young people who have chosen to follow Jesus by living among the poorest of the world's poor.

Consuming Jesus: Beyond Race and Class Divisions in a Consumer Church by Paul Louis Metzger (Eerdmans, 2007, $16) addresses divisions in the American church and how consumer religion contributes to that. He writes: "All forms of disunity in the church can be traced, in the end, to an absence of *practical* love, an absence that hinders our outreach to the world."

Send Forth Your Light: A Vision for Peace, Mission and Worship by Willard M. Swartley (Herald Press, 2007, $18.99) collects earlier writings (only one chapter is new) that tie together biblical themes of peace, mission and worship. This book is more accessible to the general reader than Swartley's excellent *Covenant of Peace,* and it covers broader themes. Though a substantial task, this book will make an excellent study for groups. It addresses a great need Swartley identifies in his introduction: "Have we been faithful as churches in our teaching and counseling [re peace]?"

Science and faith: Two books that address the integration of science and Christian faith are *The Way the World Is: The Christian Perspective of a Scientist* by John Polkinghorne (Westminster John Knox Press, 2007, $16.95) and *The Sky Is Not a Ceiling: An Astronomer's Faith* by Aileen O'Donoghue (Orbis Books, 20087, $18).

Polkinghorne, a theoretical physicist who later became an Anglican priest, takes a more systematic approach and offers a reasoned account of the Christian view of the world. O'Donoghue, on the other hand, uses autobiography to explain how she came to be both an astronomer and a Christian. Hers is a more personal account than Polkinghorne's apologia.

Goshen (Ind.) College hosts an annual conference on religion and science, which brings in renowned speakers in those fields. *The Dialogue Between Religion and Science: Challenges and Future Directions* by Antje Jackelén, edited by Carl S. Helrich (Pandora Press, 2004) includes the proceedings of the third such conference.

Herald Press: Intentional Relationships

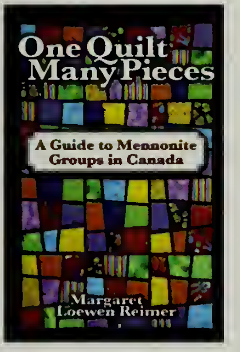
Bouquets
Intentional Relationships in Making Disciples
BRUCE HAMSHER

Bouquets

Intentional Relationships in Making Disciples

Bruce Hamsher puts everyday evangelism and daily discipleship into easily readable and understandable terms. By choosing to develop intentional relationships with those outside our personal circles, we can bring people to Christ and help turn lost souls into believers.

Paper, 88 pages, $11.99


One Quilt Many Pieces
A Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada
Margaret Loewen Reimer

One Quilt Many Pieces

A Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada

"Margaret Loewen Reimer's much-anticipated new edition of *One Quilt Many Pieces* is an indispensable map of the Anabaptist/Mennonite landscape in Canada. Especially useful are the introductions to the smaller, conservative groups."—*Sam Steiner, editor, Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*

Paper, 140 pages, $13.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

the value and values of a goshen education

Unique core values
Goshen's Christ-centered core values are passionate learning, global citizenship, compassionate peacemaking and servant leadership.

Educational value
More than 60 excellent programs of study, with internships and research for undergrads and visionary study abroad opportunities.

Financial value
Our graduates typically leave with less debt than the national average; 99 percent of students receive financial assistance, for an average package of $17,555.

Find out more about Goshen at www.goshen.edu

GOSHEN
COLLEGE
Mennonite Church USA

EDITORIAL

******************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 880 15-DEC-09 3 1
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Anna Groff

Some young adults stay, some go

When a non-Mennonite friend asked me what Mennonite Church USA faces as its biggest challenge, I remembered the latest Church Member Profile.

"We're losing membership, and many young people are not staying with the Mennonite church," I told him.

"But isn't that happening to all religious groups in the [United States]?" he asked.

It is. A survey on religious affiliation by Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life indicates that more than a quarter of adult Americans have left their childhood faith to join another religion or no religion.

Mennonite Church USA faces that same challenge. In 1989, 45 percent of the members were under age 45; now 30 percent are.

Here are several reasons adults under age 45 are leaving or distancing themselves from the church:

1. In the United States' consumeristic culture, people choose schools, clubs and neighborhoods that please them—not the other way around. No wonder people come and go in churches—Mennonite churches included.

2. Religious identity is relative to time and culture. When I spent 10 days in Jordan last fall, I learned that most people's identity as Muslim or Christian is as settled as their family name. In fact, a person's religion is designated on their identification card and rarely changes. But in our context, people remain undefined religiously. Many move from religion to religion because it is not a defining trait—and this goes for Mennonites.

3. Young adult Mennonites feel differing degrees of connection with the Mennonite church and a number desire to learn about many religions. For instance, after a cross-cultural experience they may want the freedom to travel more and experience various faith backgrounds before making a decision to join the Mennonite church—or any denomination.

4. More than 16 percent of Americans are not part of any organized faith. This goes for young Mennonites who want to live out their values (and perhaps faith) through service and lifestyle choices but do not want to join an "institution."

5. Some young Mennonites distance themselves from the Mennonite church because of attitudes toward women in leadership and the denomination's teaching position on homosexuality.

6. Other young Mennonites live in cities or places with few or no Mennonite congregations, so they connect with a different denomination.

But there is hope in this trend of Americans (including Mennonites) changing faiths.

People are not obligated to the religious group they grew up in, so people coming from other faith backgrounds—similar or different from the Mennonite church—can join.

Churches should remember that people discover or feel called to join at all stages of life. A young man may decide to become a member at age 17 in his home congregation, or a woman who had never heard of Mennonites may attend a church service at age 39 and want to learn more.

During this cultural context of fluid, ever-changing religiosity, the Mennonite church's concrete values of service, peace, community and social responsibility continue to appeal to Mennonites and non-Mennonites.

Churches should remember that people discover or feel called to join at all stages of life.

Jim Schrag, executive director of Mennonite Church USA, describes the denomination as "human as any human institution" and many young adults realize and accept this. A friend once said she knows Mennonite Church USA is not perfect, but no church or religion is. Many young adults continue their involvement in the denomination for what they receive spiritually and the support from the community, as well as how they can challenge and change the denomination.

While we study trends of faith in America and our denomination, the Mennonite church should work carefully to understand the cultural context and listen to the voices of its members and nonmembers.—*ag*

Note: The next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated May 6, 2008.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

May 6, 2008

learning from Mary

Page 8

12 Putting in fences

16 The other Good Samaritan

18 Steps of faith

32 Present in God's presence

Astounding holistic mission

Clarence E. Rempel is a pastor at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

During my time of theological formation in Bible college, I was taught that our mission is to get as many people as possible right with God and ready for heaven before Christ returns. This world was getting worse, and little could be done other than getting people ready to leave this world for the next.

I'm all for winning as many people as we can to Jesus. However, through rereading the story of Jesus, who is the full revelation of God, my perspective regarding God's mission has broadened.

Jesus taught in the synagogues, reading the Bible and explaining its meaning. Jesus confronted evil spirits and cast out demons. He healed people. He redeemed spirits with forgiveness, souls with freedom from evil and bodies with healing. If Jesus carried out God's redeeming mission in the world, then God's mission includes redeeming the whole person.

And Jesus' mission wasn't only about saving individuals in their relationship with God. He restored relationships in community. He invited social enemies into his disciple band and called them to a new way of making peace and being at peace with each other. Jesus' redeeming work called for new social relationships that superseded the enmities of gender, race and social class.

I and Amanda, my wife, were inspired by how the Mennonite church in Taiwan is living out this holistic, redeeming mission of Jesus. We were amazed in our visit last year that a national church of only 1,600 members served as a catalyst for an array of ministries in the community.

Grace, Mercy and Peace are the names of the various buildings that house the 550-bed Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien founded in 1954 by Dr. Roland and Sophie Brown. The five-member chaplain corps focuses on training and inspiring the 750-member staff in spiritual ministry.

Mennonite Foundation in Taiwan is an avenue for charitable living. It provides residential living arrangements for profoundly disabled adults with some remarkable computer adaptations that open up possibilities for communication. It is a center for in-home services for the elderly, including something like meals-on-wheels, a lifeline call system, home health care and community-based exercise and activity programs for the elderly. Mennonite Foundation provides rehab care and houses a preschool and kindergarten day care that mainstreams children with disabilities. It has both pastors and social workers on staff.

The New Dawn Development Center, founded in 1977, provides services and care for 120 children with special needs. Just as Jesus had compassion on the underserved in his society, New Dawn provides in the name of Christ for those often overlooked by society.

The Good Shepherd Center that began as a ministry to prostitutes has expanded as a shelter for abused women. The hospital plans a 200-bed facility to provide psychiatric and elder care.

The new Jong Ping Mennonite Church in Taoyuan reaches out to neighbors through children's ministry, youth ministry and English classes. A pervasive fear in the Taiwanese culture is that if ancestors are not properly honored or worshiped, bad things will happen. One step in claiming Jesus' lordship is cleaning up the ancestral god shelf in the home. The church has had five god-shelf cleansings and 16 baptisms.

A conference of 20 churches oversees body-soul ministries that serve tens of thousands of people in Taiwan. Missional churches engage God's holistic mission of redeeming the whole person in wholesome community for now and eternity.

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 9, May 6, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

MAY 9 '08
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

6
GOSHEN
COLLEGE

16
OVE NEEDS
NO
PASSPORT
http//www.cpt.org

8

8 Learning from Mary
A Mother's Day meditation—*Linda Gehman Peachey*

12 Putting in fences
A reflection on Matthew 19:16-20—*Jane Yoder-Short*

14 Is the church the army of God?
Jesus calls us to a primary, alternative community.—*Wally Fahrer*

16 The other Good Samaritan
A reflection on Luke 17:11-19—*Eve MacMaster*

19 Church, town coming back one year later
Most of Greensburg, Kan., was destroyed by a tornado on May 4, 2007; 12 died.—*Laurie Oswald Robinson*

20 Women encouraged to name brokenness
150 women gather at Laurelville to discuss path to healing, spiritual friends.—*Anna Groff*

21 SOOP volunteers offer experiences

22 EMM focuses on African-American reps
Group of six had 'emotional time' while visiting former slave-holding place.—*Linda Moffett*

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Astounding holistic mission—*Clarence E. Rempel*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking out
Steps of faith—*Philip L. Kniss*

24 For the record

30 Real families
Threshold crossings—*Sara Wenger Shenk*

32 Editorial
Present in God's presence—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Dreamstime.com | Ami Beyer

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Concerns about centralization

I am one of those who have grave concerns about the move to centralize the organizational structure of Mennonite Church USA ("Executive Board Wants Radical Changes for Mennonite Church USA Structures," April 1). It seems to rest on the assumption that unity is rooted in organizational structure when unity really grows from a shared vision and mission, a sense of ownership and broad involvement in programs and activities. The move toward centralization ignores broad social forces driving a burgeoning increase in parachurch organizations. Mainline churches are declining, while new congregations that are responsive to members' needs are growing.

Members identify far more with the programs and agencies of the church than with the central administration. Members want personal involvement in ministry. They want to follow their financial contributions with hands-on activity. The "messiness" and inconvenience of members receiving numerous requests for money and reports of program activity is balanced by the sense of relationship to specific programs and the freedom to pick and choose which to support.

The strength of decentralization is experienced in the vitality of Eastern Mennonite Missions and Virginia Mennonite Missions and the Mennonite colleges. The diversity and local relevance that comes because each has its own board and does its own recruiting and fund-raising is a strength that facilitates a kind of responsiveness that is not as possible in a centralized structure.

Of course, there needs to be some central administration that coordinates but does not control. A centralized administrative structure may seem to be more efficient in the short run but I would guess less effective in the long run.—*John W. Eby, Dillsburg, Pa.*

Editor's note: This letter is in response to a March 19 statement released by the Executive Board that proposes to create one board for Mennonite Church USA and discontinue separate boards for Mennonite Mission Network, MMA, Mennonite Education Agency and Mennonite Publishing Network.

Representation at Constituency Leaders Council

Regarding the article by Gordon Houser entitled "MC USA Proposal Affects *The Mennonite*" (April 15): Was not Anna Groff present at the March 31-April 2 meeting of the Constituency Leaders Council? In Houser's article, he states that no one from *The Mennonite* was present at the CLC meeting.

I do find it ironic that the board chair of *The Mennonite* was not informed of the meeting in February where chairpersons of the agency boards were invited.—*Warren Tyson, conference minister, Atlantic Coast Conference*

Board chair for *The Mennonite* responds

The proposal to restructure Mennonite Church USA and do away with the board for *The Mennonite* is a matter for our board of directors and its board chair to address. Neither Anna Groff nor Gordon Houser, as reporters covering meetings, have the authority to represent our board in discussions of the proposal. Their tasks are only to report on what is said in the meeting.

Houser's article does not state that no one from *The Mennonite* was present at the Constituency Leaders Council meeting. It says that no one from The Mennonite, Inc., was "represented" at CLC. —*Susan Sommer, chair, The Mennonite, Inc.*

Confuses love and worship

I was surprised and concerned to read the article by Everett J. Thomas, "Agnus Dei: Lamb of God" (March 18). To say that the Easter story "is about God worshiping us" is wrongheaded at the least. Thomas seems to confuse love and worship. Easter does not demonstrate "how much we are worth to God" but how much God loves us (John 3:16). God giving Jesus as a sacrifice was not "the ultimate act of worship" (God worshiping man), for Jesus was not a sacrifice to us but for us. Jesus was sacrificed in our place; this is the essence of the doctrine of the atonement (1 John 2:2; Hebrews 10:10). Scripture is clear that we are to worship God alone (Exodus 20:4,5, 2 Kings 17:36). God's amazing love for us was demonstrated at Easter, and perhaps that is the point Thomas

IN THIS ISSUE

If you have time to read one article in this issue carefully, read our cover story (page 8) in preparation for Mother's Day on May 11. In "Learning from Mary," Linda Gehman Peachey first describes how Jesus' mother would have been viewed before his birth: 14 years old, poor, living under foreign occupation, fleeing to Egypt in fear. "Mary was probably viewed much like our society views young mothers on welfare and immigrant women without proper documents," Peachey says. In addition to being Mother's Day, May 11 is also Pentecost Sunday, and the editorial (page 32) calls us to "reflect again on how God's Spirit can be visited upon each of us." There are also important news stories in this issue. The pastor of the Greensburg (Kan.) Mennonite Church provides an update one year after a tornado destroyed that church and 90 percent of the town (page 19). Page 20 carries a report from the Mennonite Women USA conference in April.—*Editor* strove to make. To say, "Easter is about God worshiping us" is a turn of phrase that catches one's attention. However, we should not sacrifice good theology on the altar of a catchy phrase.—*Myron Miller, Lebanon, Pa.*

Need more biblical exposition

Everett Thomas' article "Agnus Dei: Lamb of God" (March 18) was awesome. Being a lover of biblical expository preaching and writing, this was a great job.

I have often thought of how valuable we are to God that he would send his son. Thomas added a new and refreshing dimension in tying it together with Abraham and Isaac. I have never before thought of "God worshiping us." That is terrific. What a God!

Thomas must do more of such biblically insightful writing like this that touches our hearts and lives. Thomas also demonstrated good biblical expository work using the Scripture to explain the Scripture. Thanks and double thanks for demonstrating, leading and being the way in this insightful article.—*Paul Burkholder, Lititz, Pa.*

Mennonite Publishing House retirees

Regarding Carl Smeltzer's letter in Readers Say ("Pay Debt to MPH Retirees," April 1): I applaud Carl for bringing this to the public's attention. He suggests a pattern that seems all too prevalent in our Mennonite institutions.

I am slightly opposed to the health-care proposal by Mennonite USA that would cover our pastors first. I have a great fear—as stated by Carl in reference to Mennonite Publishing House retirees—that once this is done the rest of the churches' needy will be forgotten. I see this as "getting the cart before the horse" logic.

MPH retirees are owed their full pay. The poorest and those in greatest need for health care need to be taken care of first, not just if something is left over.—*Luke M. Drescher, Harrisonburg, Va.*

A God of place as well as pilgrimage

The longer I live, the more I sense that truth comes in pairs, i.e. "this is true" and "that is true." These pairs are often contradictory, or at least paradoxical. Thus, I find the truth of what my friend Dennis Byler has written, "A God on the Move" (March 4) to be part of just such a paradox.

God is a God of pilgrimage, and (not "but") God is a God of place. Unlike Dennis, Jesus did not live in three different countries and have three passports. True, within Palestine, at least in his adult life, he was often on the move. Still, he moved mostly by walking and was immersed in a given people, culture, territory and place that he came to love. True, he didn't possess the land or make his citizenship there some kind of ultimate value. Still, incarnating the purpose of God, he became "native to his place," enough to regret leaving it.

There are people these days, deeply committed to the God of the Bible, who encourage commitment to place, feeling that the God of Incarnation calls us to share God's love for the world in its specificity and locality, its particular peoples, cultures, bioregions, places.

These folks believe that global culture and its frantic mobility tend to destroy identity, wisdom, diversity and commitment, qualities grounded and nurtured in specific, small, lasting communities and places. Relatively settled peoples, especially indigenous groups, have traditionally tended the earth and its human and ecological communities without self-indulgence.

Are there temptations associated with settledness? Yes. Dennis identifies some of them. Are there temptations associated with pilgrimage? I think there are; one might be the illusory hope that one more mile, one more new adventure, one more vista will bring the longed-for fulfillment, the answer.

Still, God is the God of pilgrimage and also the God of place, of all places.—*Keith Kingsley, Formosa, Argentina*

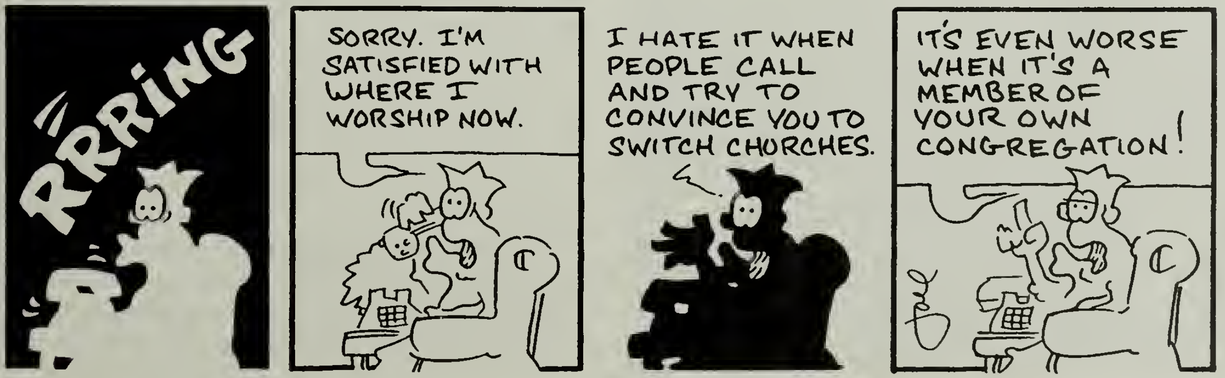
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Do you agree with the Executive Board's recommendation to form one board of directors and one communication system for Mennonite Church USA? (155 votes)

- ○ No (51%)
- ○ Yes (29%)
- ○ Not sure (201%)

Check out the new poll question at www. TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


RRRING
SORRY. I'M SATISFIED WITH WHERE I WORSHIP NOW.
I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE CALL AND TRY TO CONVINCE YOU TO SWITCH CHURCHES.
IT'S EVEN WORSE WHEN IT'S A MEMBER OF YOUR OWN CONGREGATION!

IN BRIEF

CPT partners in Colombia receive death threats

On April 10, several social and human rights organizations received a threatening email from a paramilitary group called "Águilas Negras, Bloque Norte de Colombia" (Black Eagles, North Division of Colombia). The group declared as targets for assassination members of the Southern Bolivar Agricultural-Mining Federation (the Federation), Sembrar Corporation (a human rights organization), the Program for Development and Peace in the Middle Magdalena (Programa) and the parish priests of two rural communities, Tiquisio and Regidor, in southern Bolivar province. Christian Peacemaker Teams works in close partnership with these organizations and communities.—*CPT*

Fuerza receives Telly Award

A group of Goshen (Ind.) College students produced the documentary *Fuerza* in 2006 about the effects of immigration on the small cities of Goshen and Apan, Hidalgo, Mexico. On March 26, the documentary received a Silver Telly Award. *Fuerza* was one of approximately 14,000 entries and ran alongside pieces presented by companies such as Warner Bros., the Sci Fi Channel and Current TV.—*Goshen College*

MCC ships food to Zimbabwe amid tensions

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is shipping 77 metric tons of wheat and soybeans to Zimbabwean communities where food is scarce due to drought and economic turmoil.

The shipment comes at a time of heightened uncertainty as Zimbabwe's main political parties dispute the results of national elections on March 29. The country has faced economic difficulties for years, and political tensions are creating new hardships, according to Prosper Dube, a food relief coordinator for Zimbabwe's Brethren in Christ Church.

In Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city, Dube says many residents are stocking up on groceries out of anxiety over the political situation.

MCC's food shipment is intended to provide daily lunches for about 2,500 high school students in Matobo district, a rural area of Matebeleland South province. There are several Brethren in Christ Church congregations in Matobo district, according to Marcellin Danhouno, an MCC Zimbabwe representative.

Dube, who is organizing the distribution, says food shortages have worsened in Matobo district in recent years. Farmers lost their crops due to drought last year, and many do not have seed to replant, he says.—*MCC*

GOSHEN COLLEGE

Goshen College

CNN talks to first-time voters at Goshen

CNN anchor Rick Sanchez (right) hosted a roundtable discussion with seven Goshen (Ind.) College students April 15 as part of a series called "League of First-Time Voters." It is scheduled to air on the "American Morning" show on May 6, then again on May 11 at 10 p.m. EDT. Sanchez asked the students questions about foreign policy, immigration, Iraq, race, pacifism, youth engagement in politics this year, patriotism, social issues and the presidential candidates. The student participants in the roundtable were Elizabeth Beachy, junior English major from Kalona, Iowa; Rebecca Fast, senior social work major who lives in Canada but is a dual citizen; Sheldon Good, junior communication and business double major from Telford, Pa.; Peter Koontz, senior history major from Goshen; Adriel Santiago, first-year collegiate studies major from Souderton, Pa.; Jennifer Speight, first-year English major from Cleveland; Kenda Joy Sprunger, first-year molecular biology/biochemistry major from Goshen.—*Everett Thomas*

Long-time seminary development officer dies

ELKHART, Ind.—Joseph S. Hertzler, 75, retired director of development for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, died April 15 after an extended illness.

Joseph Hertzler

Hertzler was appointed director of seminary relations in 1971, moving to Elkhart from Iowa City, Iowa, where he had been pastor of First Mennonite Church of Iowa City 1967-1971. He also had served as pastor of First Mennonite Church of Richmond, Va. He graduated from Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va., in 1962; attended Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.; and received a B.D. degree from Goshen Biblical Seminary in 1967. During his tenure at AMBS, he served as acting president of Goshen Biblical Seminary 1973-1974. He retired from AMBS in 1997.

In addition to his pastoral and seminary roles, Hertzler was Iowa-Nebraska Conference representative on the Mennonite Board of Education, board member for the Oaknoll Retirement Home in Iowa City, on the executive committee of the American Friends Service Committee of Southeast Iowa, and a member of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of the Iowa-Nebraska Conference.

Survivors include daughter Julia Hertzler and her husband, Sanford Angelos; daughter Teresa Jantz and her husband, Jeffrey; four grandchildren; one sister, Alice Yoder, of Oregon; and three brothers, Alvin, John Asa and David, all of Virginia. He was preceded in death by one sister, Amy Troyer. Hertzler's wife, Mary, died in December 2007.—*AMBS*

Bethel to give three alumni awards

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—A Kansas state official, a university president and a nurse will be honored this month as Bethel College alumni award winners. The three—Duane Goossen of Topeka, Kan., Claudia A. Limbert of Columbus, Miss., and Arlene Hett of Hillsboro, Kan.—will receive the awards on May 24.

Goossen, Kansas secretary of administration and state budget director, is the winner of the Outstanding Alumnus Award. He graduated from Bethel in 1978.

Lindsey Roeschley

U prof walks, bikes or takes the bus to work

icy Heisey boards Harrisonburg, Va., Transit bus #5 at the p next to Eastern Mennonite University's Hartzler Library. sey, chair of the Bible and religion department at EMU, is ying to do my responsible part" in caring for the environnt by leaving her car at her home and getting to campus by ier means. For two years now, she has committed herself to lking, biking or taking public transportation for the 1.5-e commute to work.—*EMU*

Limbert, president of Mississippi University for Women, is the winner of the Distinguished Achievement Award. She also graduated from Bethel in 1978.

Hett, a nurse in the emergency department of Via Christi-St. Francis Hospital in Wichita, Kan., is the winner of the Outstanding Alumna Award from the Bethel Deaconess Hospital/Bethel College Nursing Alumni Association. She is a 1969 graduate of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital School of Nursing.—*Bethel College*

Bluffton students to explore vocation

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Five Bluffton University students will explore their interests beyond the classroom thanks to Summer Dreaming grants they were awarded by Bluffton's Pathways to Mission and Vocation program, which receives generous support from the Lilly Endowment Inc. Sophomores Casi Kadangs, Svetlana Mumba, Carole W. Ouedraogo, Deborah Telahun and Erin Neufeld Weaver will use the $1,500 provided to further discover their career interests during the 2008 summer season.

Kadangs, a premed/biology major from Job, Nigeria, will volunteer at the Gwaimen Center in Kwoi, Nigeria, which works with those affected by AIDS/HIV, namely widows and orphans.

Mumba, an accounting major from Chingola, Zambia, will work with the African Children Trust in Chingola, Zambia, which provides free health care and education to those in need.

Ouedraogo, a business administration and economics major from Burkina Faso, will work with the Association of Parents and Friends of Children Suffering from Encephalitis. She will learn how the nonprofit organization obtains its funding and international aid, as well as how it provides children with English lessons.

Telahun, a biology major from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, will work with the children's ministry of Ethiopian Evangelical Church in Denver.

Erin Neufeld Weaver, a music education major from Bluffton, will travel to Guatemala, where she will integrate her love of music into the experiences of studying Spanish and developing relationships.—*Bluffton College*

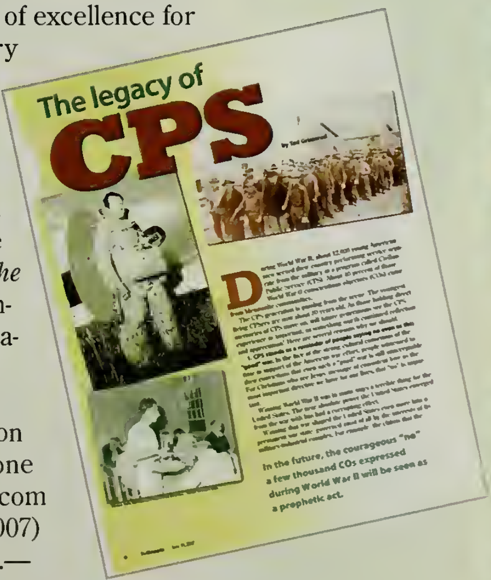
The Mennonite wins five awards at ACP

DALLAS, Texas—At the annual meeting of the Associated Church Press April 20-23 in Dallas, *The Mennonite* took home five awards, including two awards of excellence (first place).

The magazine won one award of excellence for Magazine Design: Spread or Story for the article "The Legacy of CPS" by designer Dee Birkey (see photo). Birkey also won an honorable mention for Magazine Cover for the Nov. 6, 2007, cover.

The other award of excellence came for Ancillary Product for *The Mennonite*'s media kit, put together by Rebecca Helmuth, the magazine's director of advertising and subscriptions.

Assistant editor Anna Groff won two honorable mention awards, one for her news story "Mennomeet.com Launches for Singles" (Aug. 7, 2007) and one for Publication Web Site.—*Gordon Houser*



The legacy of CPS

In the future, the courageous "no" a few thousand COs expressed during World War II will be seen as a prophetic act.

—compiled by Gordon Houser

IN BRIEF

Refusing to swear

According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (March 3), California State University at East Bay fired Marianne Kearney-Brown, a Quaker mathematics instructor, because she refused to sign an unaltered state loyalty oath. In previous teaching positions she would sign the oath but add her own modifiers so as to align it with her pacifist Quaker convictions. Instead of saying "swear" she inserted "affirm." And she would add "nonviolently" when saying she would "support and defend" the U.S. and state constitutions "against all enemies, foreign and domestic." California State wouldn't allow such amendments. Kearney-Brown said all the university cared about was whether she signed an unaltered oath, not whether she meant it; neither did it care about the quality of her teaching. *—The Christian Century*

Learning

A Mother's Day meditation

by Linda Gehman Peachey

Dreamstime.com

Every year Mother's Day provides an opportunity to hear tributes to mothers and many suggestions for gifts. It also provides an opportunity to think about Mary, Jesus' mother, and ponder what her life was like. What did she experience as a woman, a wife, a mother? What can we learn from her and her faith?

The Gospels give some clues about Mary's life:

- She was young when the angel Gabriel visited her. Given the culture of that time, she was likely about 14 years old.
- She was poor. She had to give birth in a stable, and when it was time to go to the temple to make the correct sacrifices, she and Joseph could afford only two doves, rather than a lamb and a dove.

As a poor young woman, Mary was probably considered insignificant and disposable.

- She lived under foreign occupiers who demanded the people be counted in order to tax them more accurately. No matter that she was about to give birth, she was forced to make the long, difficult journey to Bethlehem.
- She experienced fear and had to flee to Egypt as a refugee in order to escape Herod's wrath.

These are some of the realities which framed Mary's life. In fact, her life was probably much like many women around the world today, especially poor women or those suffering war and violence.

Mary was also dedicated to God. From the beginning of Luke's Gospel, it is clear that Mary trusted in God and God's ability to save her people. She was also a thoughtful and assertive disciple who followed Jesus all the way to the cross and was with the disciples at Pentecost.

Yet this is not how she would have appeared to her Roman overlords or to Herod and the religious leaders of that time. As a poor young woman, she was probably considered insignificant and disposable. As an unmarried pregnant woman, she was likely viewed as irresponsible and immoral. And coming from Nazareth, she was no doubt seen as part of a troublesome people, one of those who resisted Roman rule and did not observe the law properly.

Single-parent families: Indeed, Mary was probably viewed much

from Mary

like our society views young mothers on welfare or immigrant women without proper documents. Traci West, in her book *Disruptive Christian Ethics,* describes how poor, young women—especially women of color—are portrayed in negative ways, even to the point of blaming them for many of our problems with crime and violence. She notes, for instance, that the 1995 Personal Responsibility bill asserted that "the higher the incidence of single-parent families in a neighborhood the higher the incidence of violent crime and burglary." These levels of crime could also be symptoms of other problems, such as the extent to which people experience hunger or inadequate schools or poor housing conditions. But rather than look at these more systemic issues, our congressional leaders chose to focus on poor, black, single mothers.

By contrast, West points out, our society does not give similar attention to the behavior of rich, white men: those who are the Chief Executive Officers of our corporations and in fact control most of our financial, political and religious institutions. Why have we heard so much about "welfare queens" yet there is no comparable outcry over the fact that some executives earn more than 20,000 times what a minimum-wage worker earns?

In the aftermath of the 1995 changes in welfare laws, researcher Lisa Dobson decided to interview low-income women and girls in Boston in order to better understand their lives. She said: "They spoke of little erosions which finally wear you down into someone you don't want to be. They spoke of having no car, no warm coats, no baby clothes, no functioning laundry in the building, no elevator and many stairs, no heat sometimes … of long lines at clinics … and above all, of having no one to offer a kind word." Clearly, these women longed for someone to look on them with favor rather than disdain. They longed for a hopeful word, that God loves them and their children.

Fortunately, Mary was able to believe in such a loving God. As she sang so remarkably in Luke 1:46-55, God was giving her a child who represented hope and life. Far from scorning her, God was blessing her and her people. God will not accept the status quo but turn things upside down. God will reverse the conditions that caused her and her people to experience hunger and humiliation.

Prophet and witness: As Ruby Sales, a social activist from the days of the Southern Freedom Movement, explains: "Mary is more than a young girl with unrealistic expectations and fantasies. She is a prophet and witness who sees the fertile land of freedom in the arid desert of Roman imperialism. And she is willing to work to bring this freedom land into being even when there is little evidence except God's promise that it will come. In this spirit, she sees her pregnancy not as an occasion to despair but as a grace-filled moment. Mary is in harmony with many women in her community who see children as gifts and assets that the community can depend on to push forward their struggle."

What if our economic and religious institutions focused on blessing poor, vulnerable, young women?

West also urges us to accept Mary's speech as a prophetic word. Christians must therefore take this witness seriously and ask what steps must be taken to adhere to it. "What measures should be enacted to achieve the parity between rich and poor, lowly and powerful in her prophecy?" she writes.

In truth, what would it look like if Christians cared for those in our society who are most like Mary? What if our economic and religious institutions focused on blessing poor, vulnerable, young women? Certainly, we'd have to go beyond cards and flowers.

Twenty years ago, Marilyn Waring wrote the book *Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women are Worth.* A Member of Parliament in New Zealand, she noticed that much of the work women do is not recognized in our economy. Because capitalism values only those activities that earn or exchange money, all unpaid work—such as gardening, preparing food and caring for children—is invisible and of little consequence in this

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

system. Since no money changes hands, this work is considered "unproductive."

Production that serves human need: But we could do things differently. We could, for example, measure our economy with an Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW) rather than the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). GDP calculates all economic activity, whether positive or negative; the only requirement is that money changes hands. Consequently, an oil spill can be good for the GDP, as it creates many jobs; the same is true for pornography or the production of weapons. By comparison, the ISEW rewards only production that serves human need and penalizes activities that harm people and the earth. In a tangible way, it seeks to value people over money, caregiving over consuming, peacebuilding over the business of war.

Global Women's Strike is another group insisting that our economic systems value mothers and what mothers do. It is not enough to celebrate Mother's Day. There should also be payment for all caring work, in wages, pensions or land; food security, paid maternity leave, clean water, health care, housing, transport, literacy and protection from all violence.

Instead of following the way of Jesus, her son, we have supported the ways of Caesar and Herod.

We could also do more in our churches and communities. In addition to promoting the above, we could:

- Be careful not to equate work with a paid job.
- Make sure everyone does their share of daily household tasks and that job descriptions don't require having others do this work for us.
- Insist that everyone be paid fair and livable wages.
- Advocate that Social Security benefits be tied to labor rather than the amount of money earned.
- Ensure that women's voices and wisdom are included at all levels of our institutions.
- Listen to and learn from those in our society who are most like Mary.

Unfortunately, we have too often blessed the way things are. Instead of paying close attention to Mary's words, we have glossed over them. Instead of following the way of Jesus, her son, we have supported the ways of Caesar and Herod. As a prayer in our hymnal expresses:

"Gracious God, hear our confession. …
We have exalted the proud and powerful, put down the weak,
saturated the rich with good things, neglected the poor,
sent the hungry away empty-handed.
We have helped ourselves.
Show us your mercy.
Help us show mercy."

Let us be challenged by Mary and her vision: her vision of a world in which mothers will no longer be humiliated, a world that values their labor, a world that honors and protects their children. Let us join her as a disciple, committed to following Jesus and the ways of God, no matter what.

Linda Gehman Peachey, Akron, Pa., directs the Women's Advocacy Program for Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries

stockxpert.com

Rainy season

by Jeanne Lohmann

More than content, now the rains
are here, my life slowed
to the fluid texture of water,
I begin to talk with angels
arriving on the wet slant sheets of air.

Though I never thought this would happen, each year in the drowning season when the weather shifts and the word goes out, the angels come with their bewildering messages.

Boundaries tilt toward the unseen,
and the patient angels of early winter
enter the warmth of my dry house
where they wait until
the excited, offbeat heart
learns over and again,
the steady rhythm of rain.

Jeanne Lohmann lives in Olympia, Wash.

Grace

by Betsy Johnson-Miller

You like the stained
glass windows

not the doctrinal ones
large and mean
-ing to capture
your attention

but the small
ones
at the bottom
four pansies you'd find
in any old woman's garden

four pansies
that bend
the color red
all the way
from blue to black

simple flowers
managing an eternal
sunset

and you wish
the glass was cloth

so you could wear
such a washing

such light

Betsy Johnson-Miller lives in Avon, Minn.

A reflection on Matthew 19:16-20

Putting

by Jane Yoder-Short

Every fall we put a fence around our raspberry patch to keep the rabbits from feasting on too many thorny berry branches. If we want fruit next year, a keep-out is fence essential. Down the road is a keep-in fence. It keeps our neighbors sheep in and away from the crazy drivers on our road.

Fences serve different purposes. Some keep wanderers in, and some keep wanderers out. Some define spaces and identify boundaries. The church also has boundaries and fences, some helpful, others questionable.

When I was growing up, fences kept changing—not only in the fields to make way for new farming methods but in the church to make way for progressive thinking. In the first half of the 20th century, clear fences were important for Mennonites. My great aunt was kicked out of church for crossing the movie-theater fence. She was reinstated after she confessed to the error of her ways. When I was a teenager, the theater was no longer outside the line. My church youth group even went bowling—much to my parents' surprise. In their eyes, bowling alleys were dark smoky places where no good Mennonite would tread. Had bowling alleys and theaters improved? Are fences time sensitive? How dependable are fences?

The church needs to have a clear identity. How can we welcome people if we don't know what we are welcoming people to?

The first house my husband and I bought had a bathroom tacked on the back. The lot was fairly small. There was barely room to walk between the bathroom extension and the neighbor's fence. When our neighbor went to sell her house, we discovered our bathroom was on her property. The fence had been put in the wrong place. Both picket fences and church fences can be misplaced.

As a teen I became suspicious of fences—especially fences that limited the role of women in church. Which fences are God-intended and which are posts pounded in by human choice or even human error?

When it comes to fences, Jesus seems to give mixed messages. On the one hand, he ignores some fences. He talks to the socially questionable Samaritan woman. He parties with tax collectors and sinners. He crosses religious lines. He heals on the Sabbath and forgives sins. On the other hand, Jesus also states that he came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17). He calls on his followers to deny themselves and take up their cross (Mark 8:34). We know from the story of the rich young man that Jesus didn't create a fenceless group. This man knew enough about what following Jesus entailed that he chose not to join up (Matthew 19:16-20).

Let's look at this fence story. This young man asks, "Good Teacher, what must I do to be sure I'm inside the fence?"

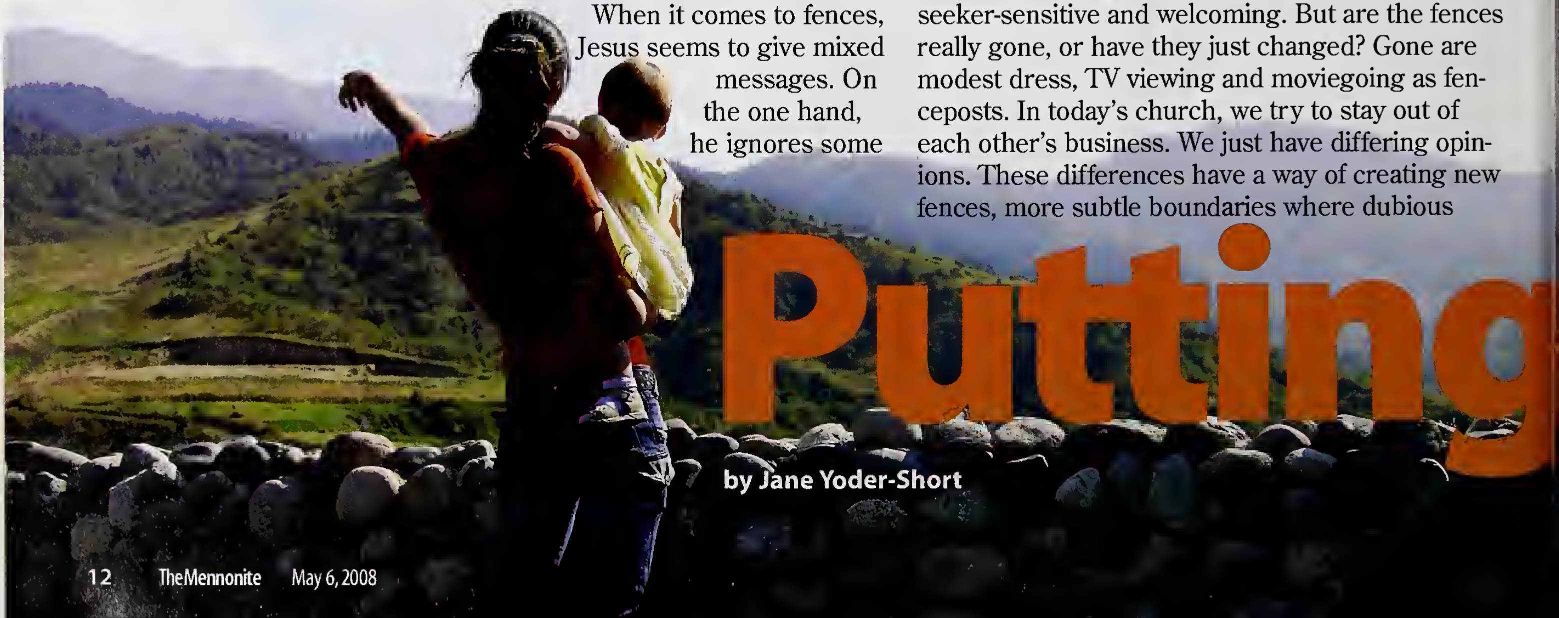
Jesus responds, "Don't call me good." There is no one good inside this group. Then Jesus reminds him that he already knows the fenceposts—Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, and love your neighbor as yourself.

The young man claims to have stayed inside the fence since his youth but he still had this nagging feeling there was something more.

Jesus said just do one thing, "Sell all you own and give it to the poor and follow me." Jesus seems to be testing loyalty—how serious are you about seeking the good God seeks?

Jesus didn't soft pedal his message so that the rich young man could feel good about himself. In fact, the man goes away sad. How does this fit with where we are today? Do we sometimes make following Jesus sound too easy, leaving people with a nagging feeling there is something more?

In today's church, the rich young man's loyalty would most likely be a private issue. Nobody would question his commitment, and surely nobody would ask to look in his checkbook. Many churches seem to have pulled up their fences to become seeker-sensitive and welcoming. But are the fences really gone, or have they just changed? Gone are modest dress, TV viewing and moviegoing as fenceposts. In today's church, we try to stay out of each other's business. We just have differing opinions. These differences have a way of creating new fences, more subtle boundaries where dubious



political views and an incompatible social smell can put you in the questionable borderlands.

As Mennonites, we are tired of fences. We blew it and put up wrong fences, and now we seem a little squeamish about any fences. But the church needs them. The church needs to have a clear identity. How can we welcome people if we don't know what we are welcoming people to? A church without fences has a muddled identity. We need markers that let people know who we are—not to keep sinful people out, since none is good and sin is present on all sides, but so we understand who we are and in what field we are grazing.

Putting in fenceposts is messy business. Posts have a way of stepping on people's toes. We all have places we think there should be a post, and if we are honest, too often it marks someone else's sin, not ours. Fortunately for everyone, post placing is not the job of any one person. It is the job of the believing body together.

Matthew 16:13-19 provides some fencing guidelines. The passage begins with who Jesus is and moves on to the church's identity and her role in binding and loosing. Binding and loosing are rabbinic terms. In his book *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community before the Watching World* (1992), John Howard Yoder explains: "To 'bind' in rabbinic usage is to respond to a question of ethical discernment: We still have the root in our word obligate. To 'loose' is to free from obligation."

Binding and loosing are about deciding who we are as a body of believers. If we look closer at this passage, we see that binding and loosing is done in the context of Peter's confession, "You are the Messiah." Messiah carries with it connotations of an anointed ruler who rules with justice and brings peace. Binding and loosing are done under the umbrella of a people who declare Jesus as their ruler, their Messiah.

Another clue to the context of binding and loosing is found in realizing that Peter didn't get Jesus' identity right because he was so brilliant but because he had help from God's Spirit. Peter's insight went beyond his personal agenda. Binding and loosing are done with the help of God's Guiding Spirit. Seeking God's guidance together becomes a corporate spiritual discipline.

John Howard Yoder explains another dimension of binding and loosing. Yoder reminds us that the rabbi was not so much a preacher as a keeper of the community's moral memory. The ongoing process of binding and loosing creates a backlog of precedents whose meanings are fine-tuned and updated through the experiences of the day.

Anabaptist history is loaded with moral discernment. In 1527, the Swiss Anabaptists met to discuss fences and markers. They struggled to spell out who they were and how they differed from the then Catholic Church. They came up with the Schleitheim Confession.

More recently we recall the life-giving Civilian Public Service stories where Mennonites chose to serve in nonmilitary ways. These memories can help us put up new markers that remind us of our call to pray for our enemies, not wipe them out.

A good fence understands there is no way to keep evil out and that forgiveness abounds on all sides.

We can also recall times when church authority and Christ's authority were confused, when posts were pounded in to mark the correct cut of the coat collar or the length of the sleeve. They had good intentions, protecting people from worldly seductions, but God's mission of reconciliation became blurred. Because we have sometimes misplaced posts doesn't mean we should throw out when trying to discern guidelines. We can learn from our mistakes. We can learn to seek the moving of God's Spirit before cementing in a fence. We can learn to be humble and realize our insights are limited.

As we face today's issues, we are not left to individually and blindly plant posts, but we can build on our understanding of Jesus, on the guidance of the Holy Spirit and on our rich history.

Fences can be nourishing; they can save us from hazardous roads where cultural bulldozers blind us. A good fence is one that is discerned together among those who hold Jesus as their ruler. A good fence builds community and creates a space that tells the world who we are and whose pasture we graze in. A good fence understands there is no way to keep evil out and that forgiveness abounds on all sides. A good fence is a gift from God, where God's love mysteriously thrives and ripples through the community with news of the good grazing land God is providing. Who isn't ready for pasture fields beyond the chaotic dominions of our world?

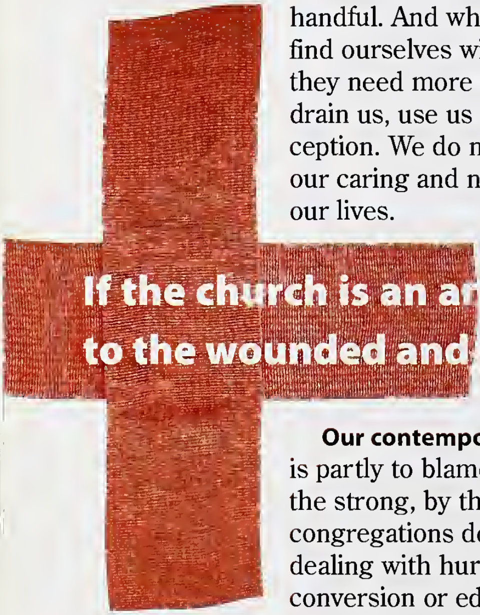
Jane Yoder-Short is a member of East Union Mennonite Church in Kalona, Iowa. This article is adapted from a sermon she preached there.

Is the church the

by Wally Fahrer

As a pastor and now as a counselor, I have been troubled with the difficulty Christians seem to have with wounded people. I have brought people to church and seen them welcomed warmly, only to have them come back later feeling utterly rejected. It was as though, when the newcomer began to share his or her pain, the church seemed to back off in retreat. At the same time, the strong or relatively whole people seem to have little or no trouble integrating. Why is that?

It may simply be a human characteristic. We all find ourselves more attracted to those able to give as well as receive. We become more guarded when we encounter people who appear to be a handful. And when we meet wounded people, we find ourselves withdrawing because we realize they need more than we can give. We fear they will drain us, use us up. There is truth in such a perception. We do need to develop clear boundaries in our caring and not let wounded people dominate our lives.



If the church is an army, what happens to the wounded and infirm?

Our contemporary evangelical model of church is partly to blame. We tend to be communities "of the strong, by the strong and for the strong." Most congregations do not have a strategy or plan for dealing with hurting people. Perhaps we assume conversion or education in the Scriptures will sort out all human pain. But the evangelical church has embraced a military model of church that is fundamentally inadequate and causes us to fail in our efforts to be the body of Christ.

An army is based on three basic tasks: recruiting, training and deploying. If any nation is to have a strong military, it must be able to recruit an adequate number of soldiers. During the Vietnam War, America initiated a draft because it could not recruit enough voluntary soldiers to fight such a conflict. Recruiting potential soldiers is a problem in peacetime, too, because those who enlist tend to be unemployed or from poor families or minority social groups. Such people might make good foot soldiers and "cannon fodder" but don't tend to make good leaders. Recruiting the right kind of soldier is the first task of building a solid military.

To shape a recruit into a soldier also requires extensive training and preparation. There is usually a kind of shock physical conditioning and discipline that focuses on obedience and fitness. A soldier is recruited and trained with the end goal of becoming a soldier who can fight effectively. The soldier must be in top physical condition to fight in difficult situations. They need to be conditioned to obey orders in the most traumatic situations without question—even if their life is on the line. Training recruits to be true soldiers is the second task of building a solid military.

Recruiting the right people and training them thoroughly is pointless if the soldiers are not deployed to the conflict. Soldiers need to be in the area of conflict with the right weapons and all the logistics to allow them to fight effectively. Without proper weapons, food, clothing or shelter, the army will never be able to win the war, even if they have the best-trained soldiers.

This is largely our contemporary model of church. And in many ways it works. Evangelism is like recruitment, discipleship is like basic training, and mission is like deployment. The problem with this model is not in what it does but what it doesn't do. It doesn't provide for the wounded and infirm.

In the military, there is no place for the physically or emotionally infirm. They do not make good soldiers. They would never pass the physical requirements. And if a soldier is wounded in action, they are treated in a field hospital, but ultimately, if their wounds are serious, they are sent back home and discharged from active duty. At some point, the burden of care for the wounded falls on the greater society.

Here is where the model breaks down. If the church is an army, what happens to the wounded and infirm? What "greater society" are they sent back to? Who cares for them if they are no longer fit for ministry, cannot give out and must instead be cared for? Often the answer is no one. This model makes no provision for such a need. Whether it is the missionary returning from the field broken and spent from efforts at cross-cultural communication and isolation, or the emotionally traumatized adult who moves to Christ but brings an ongoing struggle to find healing from wounds, our model of church is ill-equipped to address these needs.

We prefer to avoid such responsibility. We'd rather have broken missionaries care for them-

army of God?

Jesus calls us to a primary, alternative community.

selves, and we'd rather not recruit the traumatized into the kingdom.

The only other model brought up in some evangelical circles is the hospital. But the church isn't a hospital either. If all we did was care for the wounded, where would mission happen? A church modeled after a hospital emphasizes caring for the wounded and hurting but not on evangelism and social engagement.

If we are not to be an army or a hospital, what are we to be? We might try the model Jesus suggested—a kingdom or a society. I have used the words primary, alternative community. We need to be an alternative to the contemporary society. We cannot be simply a spiritual organization within a given society. Neither should we see ourselves as simply bringing our nation "back to God." We need to be an alternative that humanizes life by its very character. We need to explore and model ways of living together that are loving, healing and life-giving. The church needs to be the society where the wounded can return and be welcomed, honored and cared for.

> **The church needs to be the society where the wounded can return and be welcomed, honored and cared for.**

How do evangelism, discipleship and mission look if they do not emerge from a military model of church? Evangelism should focus less on eternity and more on a change of allegiance or citizenship. Discipleship should focus on skills of living in loving relationships (rather than simply Bible reading and prayer). And mission should be about communicating the Good News of the kingdom—a vision of transformation of culture in which Jesus Christ is truly Lord—rather than getting people to heaven.

Eighty years ago, my father was given a ticket to emigrate from Germany to the United States. He left a society between two world wars. He had only four years of education and would not have the opportunity for more. After arriving in the United States at age 21, he went to night school, received a high school diploma and became a U.S. citizen. Then he went on to university, receiving a bachelor's degree, a master's and a doctorate. Eventually he became vice president of a liberal arts college. His younger brother was left behind and drafted into the Nazi army. He became a prisoner of war and nearly died of disease and starvation. The difference was a ticket.

My father did not exchange one army for another. He exchanged one kingdom for another. And that exchange was life changing. Jesus said that without a new birth, we cannot begin to see the kingdom. Without a ticket, my father could never have come to the United States. But having received it, he was able to change his allegiance and citizenship—something that changed his life and future. Can we make such an exchange possible for the broken and wounded of our world? We can and we must.

Wally Fahrer has been working since 1998 as a Christian counselor in England, based in Horsham.

Dreamstime.com

LOVE NEEDS NO PASSPORT
http://www.cpt.org
BORDER PATROL

cpt.org

The other Good Samaritan

by Eve MacMaster

Karl Barth, one of the great theologians of the past century, famously said that when we read the Bible we should hold the daily newspaper in our other hand. He was making the point that the ancient Scriptures are a tool for interpreting modern life. The old text is the key to understanding the events happening all around us in our community and the world, and these events in turn are the context in which we read and interpret Scripture.

The war in Iraq, approaching environmental catastrophe, the growing gap between rich and poor—and, closer to home, the events in the lives of our congregation—are the context in which we read and interpret the Scriptures.

Consider, for example, Luke 17:11-19. On first reading, it is a story of Jesus healing 10 lepers and the example of one returning to give thanks. On the surface, it seems to be about the importance of saying thank you. That's how we teach it to children.

But the kicker in the story is that the one who returns, glorifying God, the one who gives thanks to God, is a Samaritan, whom Jesus calls "a foreigner."

Earlier in Luke's Gospel, Jesus tells the parable that we know as the story of the Good Samaritan: A despised outsider comes to the aid of an injured traveler while religious leaders pass on by. Jesus points to the Samaritan as an example of keeping the second part of the greatest commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

The Samaritan in the lesser-known story is an example of keeping the first part of that same commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul."

The kicker in the story is that the one who returns, glorifying God, the one who gives thanks to God, is a Samaritan, whom Jesus calls "a foreigner."

A reflection on Luke 17:11-19

Both times, the foreigner with the wrong religion acts more faithfully than the people with the correct belief system.

Jesus heals 10 lepers, and only one returns to give praise to God. Jesus says to his disciples, "Were not 10 made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"

A Samaritan who knows how to truly worship God is even more shocking than a Samaritan who knows how to love his neighbor.

Jewish hatred of the Samaritans went back 400 years. Both communities worshiped the Lord and followed the teachings of Moses, but they did not agree on anything else. The Jews worshiped at the temple in Jerusalem and the Samaritans at Mount Gerizim.

It reminds me of what's going on in the church today.

American policy makers, many of whom are public about professing their faith in Jesus Christ, have been pursuing a policy of revenge ever since Sept. 11, 2001, and a policy of greed that goes back to the earliest days of European colonization of this continent.

At a time when fear and hatred of Muslims is on the rise in this country, most Christians are hiding in the temple, while others are taking the lead in interfaith peacemaking.

Why aren't more evangelicals actively engaged in following the One who taught: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you."?

Jesus didn't just say that. He did it. He practiced what he preached. He healed a Samaritan leper as well as nine Jewish lepers, and he used the Samaritan's gratitude as a teachable moment to show the disciples that God's love isn't limited to people from the right religion. God is not like us. God's salvation comes to people who have no right to expect it—people like the Samaritan.

Lepers were the ultimate untouchables, physically, medically and ritually unclean.

When Jesus heals the 10 lepers, Luke uses a Greek word that means "he made clean." But when he speaks to the Samaritan who returned, he speaks of more than cleansing from leprosy or healing from disease. He says, "Get up and go on your way, your faith has made you well." Well is the NRSV and NIV translation of the Greek word "sozo," which actually means "save" or "rescue."

Ten have been made clean; one has been saved. Nine return to their homes and families, changed on the outside; one experiences salvation.

Nine fail to see that when the Lord cleansed them he accepted all of them, including the foreigner. They take the gift and go on with life as usual, not understanding that something new has happened, that more than bodies have been healed. A division between Jew and Samaritan has been healed. No longer is there insider and outsider, us and them.

We have been called to share the peace that is God's active, energizing presence in the world, bringing life and hope and healing.

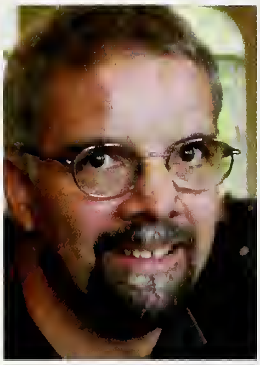
The peace of Christ is not the absence of war or the end of tension or the feeling of well-being. The peace of Christ is the gift of salvation, which, in its fullest meaning, is not about shipping souls to heaven but healing broken bodies and broken relationships. And it's not just healing of individuals but the healing of the nations.

This is what we have been called to share—the peace that is God's active, energizing presence in the world, bringing life and hope and healing. This is how we can be "good Samaritans," loving both God and neighbor.

Eve MacMaster is pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Gainesville, Fla.

stockspert.com

Steps of faith



Philip L. Kniss is pastor of Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

I walk more lately. Last summer, I changed my exercise routine so that I walk four miles most weekday mornings. I leave early, usually before daybreak, and trek from the Park View neighborhood to downtown Harrisonburg, Va. I walk the sidewalks, varying my route each day. Irene, my wife, and I also walk more together than we used to. When we're in the mood for ice cream at Kline's, or supper at Little Grill, we'll walk the several-mile round trip rather than drive. Once we joined 150 others in the CROP Walk downtown.

I like to think of walking as part of my faith journey. No, I don't experience divine revelation on every walk, I don't pray and recite Scripture with every step, and my mind is not focused on God at all times. Nothing dramatic has happened at all. But the daily discipline of walking has changed me. My awareness of the world around me has sharpened.

In contrast, when I drive through town with windows up, air conditioner on and radio playing, I effectively separate myself from the space I inhabit and the people who inhabit it with me. I need only road signs and automated traffic signals to safely navigate. I never need to make eye contact with another human being or even acknowledge their existence. No wonder we are so prone to road rage. The physical and social isolation of a motor vehicle encourages us to treat others not as fellow human beings but as objects in my path.

I'm not saying the car is the devil's handiwork. Cars are useful, practical and necessary as a mode of transportation, especially when distance, cargo or groups are involved. Thank God for the creative and entrepreneurial minds that made it possible. But as a society we have become so dependent on it that in the course of several generations we have slowly stopped walking. Without realizing it, we daily choose a way of life that maintains our isolation, not only from family and friends but, more importantly, from strangers.

So I have decided to walk more. Not because it makes me holier but because it keeps me more human. Since I started walking every day, I have a growing appreciation for how beautiful our town is and how diverse in class and ethnicity. I have observed some early morning rhythms of people who work at the poultry plant, sweep sidewalks, mow the courthouse lawn, go to the diner for coffee, lounge on the steps of apartment buildings, deliver bread to the grocery store or engage in other morning rituals. I now recognize the faces of some area residents whom I greet regularly, though I don't yet know their names. Several times I've met someone I know on the sidewalk and joined them for several blocks, sharing an unexpected and pleasant conversation. I have lived in this area for 17 years, but in four months I gained a much better grasp of the cultural geography of our community. I know in a deeper way what sort of houses, businesses and shared spaces line the streets.

My awareness of and attentiveness to my community has grown immeasurably, simply because I walk more.

My awareness of and attentiveness to my community has grown immeasurably, simply because I walk more. I think greater awareness and attentiveness must be pleasing to God. Our calling as Christians, and as human beings, is to participate with God as collaborators in this world. But how can we do that if we shield ourselves from the world and its inhabitants? How can we love our neighbors when we make sure they stay invisible to us? Let's make our walk with Jesus more than just a metaphor. The rest of you can start wherever you need to. I'm starting with the streets of my town. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Poverty in the suburbs**—Valerie Weaver-Zercher
- **Living without the answers**—Ken Gibble
- **Visualizing nonviolence**—J. Denny Weaver

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

Church, town coming back one year later

Most of Greensburg, Kan., was destroyed by a tornado on May 4, 2007; 12 died.

Jeffrey Blackburn, pastor of Greensburg (Kan.) Mennonite Church, searches for words big enough to convey the gratitude for Mennonite Church USA's support after a May 4 tornado last year that destroyed their church building. As he struggled to find language to reflect this past year's experiences during an April 2 interview, Blackburn looked out the study window of his newly built home in Greensburg. He seemed to rifle through a thousand emotions as he looked at twisted trees and empty lots.

What words are big enough to tell how it felt to have strangers help stunned homeowners pick through shreds for any last thread of family photos and favorite things?

What words are big enough to tell how it felt to receive letters, emails and phone calls from Mennonites and others across Kansas, the United States and around the world, offering prayers and emotional support?

What words are big enough to tell how it felt to receive monetary gifts totaling about $100,000 and countless volunteer hours from Mennonite Church USA constituents since the tornado ravaged 90 percent of the town (population 1,500) and killed 12 residents?

"I simply say 'thank you,' knowing those are small words for something so big," Blackburn said. "But that's what we have in our English language to convey our gratitude. We realized we have a support network that we didn't dream existed. I'm not the first to say it, but in all of this, you learn to hold things loosely and hold people close. When things are all gone, you cope with the tragedy by having those relationships."

This network is what sustains Greensburg Mennonite members as they struggle with the rest of the town to rebuild streets, homes and churches and to rebound in persevering faith. Greensburg Mennonite is rebuilding its church on its original foundation. Construction began in March and should be complete by October.

The church plans to use the Mennonite Church USA monetary gifts received from numerous members and congregations for the expected $300,000 shortfall that will exist after the excellent insurance covers main costs, expected at about $1.25 million. The church is adding new handicapped accessible features that were not part of the original building and not covered by the insurance package.

"We had tons of volunteer help in initial cleanup from Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) and from Mennonites from South Central and Western District conferences and beyond," Blackburn said. "And now we've hired a contractor to rebuild. MDS is rebuilding with those who didn't have insurance coverage or other resources."

Photo provided

Jeffrey Blackburn, pastor of the Greensburg (Kan.) Mennonite Church that was destroyed by a tornado one year ago

When it comes to resources, Greensburg Mennonite counts itself rich. The independent, pioneering spirit, so much a part of rural Kansas mentality and Mennonite ethos—coupled with the work of God's Spirit—is helping the community recover. The original church was built in 1978 and post-tornado has 65 to 70 members. About 30 percent of the church body relocated and now live too far way to attend. Many of those who remain are not only rebuilding the church but also their homes.

Consider Paul Unruh, a farmer, and his wife, Shirley. They are rebuilding their home and farm seven miles south of Greensburg. Theirs was one of the first properties in the church family to be hit by the 1.7-mile-wide tornado that pummeled western Kansas for nearly two hours.

In some ways, rebuilding structures is the easier part of their recovery, Unruh said. The harder part has been reprogramming oneself to be a gracious receiver.

"One thing we don't talk about much at church is how to be good recipients," Unruh said. "In the early days of cleanup, I had to apologize a lot for being a lousy receiver. I've canned a lot of meat for others through Mennonite Central Committee. But never in my wildest dreams did I think that Shirley and I would be eating MCC turkey ourselves."

Blackburn agreed that being gracious receivers has challenged the entire church family. No members lost their lives, but about 60 percent of the congregation lost their homes.—*Laurie Oswald Robinson for Mennonite Church USA*

You learn to hold things loosely and hold people close.
—Jeffrey Blackburn

Women encouraged to name brokenness

150 women gather at Laurelville to discuss path to healing, spiritual friends.

Anna Groff

In a workshop, Elizabeth Soto Albrecht shares a carving of a woman and baby, which could symbolize Mary and Jesus. Soto Albrecht said she views it as symbolizing God holding her.

At the April 11-13 Women in Conversation conference "Daring to Let Our Spirits Soar," Carolyn Holderread Heggen recalled the time she sat through a church business meeting in which the head of elders said women could not speak from behind the pulpit. The only exception was to lead singing.

After the meeting, she and other women gathered in the parking lot. They were angry at the rule and ashamed they had not protested, especially since their children were in the meeting.

Holderread Heggen, keynote speaker for the conference held at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa., shared this grievance and encouraged the women to "acknowledge our wounds and grieve our losses" as part of the journey from brokenness to healing.

She listed several other injustices she mourns, including the absence of early Anabaptist writings from women, the limited vocational choices women face and the lack of articles and letters written by women in Mennonite publications.

Holderread Heggen, who is currently working on the Transforming the Wounds of War project in Oregon, provided these additional suggestions for the 150 women gathered:

First, listen to your own inner longings and desires. The church and our culture make women feel more virtuous when we defer to others.

"We are more attuned to the needs of others than the longings and groaning of our own hearts," she added.

Second, learn to forgive yourself and others.

"[Forgiveness] is a strategy that's very powerful in moving beyond bitterness," Holderread Heggen said. "It's a gift we give ourselves."

Third, reject theology that devalues females and is contrary to the teachings and example of Jesus.

"The church hasn't always been as affirming of our feminine bodies and souls as Jesus has been," she said.

In a workshop, "From Suffering to Soaring," Elizabeth Soto Albrecht from Lancaster, Pa., spoke of two types of crying: a pitying cry that does not liberate and an open cry that makes us stronger.

"The pity cry hinders true healing," she said.

When crying that way it is important to question why you are crying and try to name it directly; otherwise the tears could justify the suffering, she added.

The conference was cosponsored by Mennonite Women USA and Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. A second gathering took place April 18-20 in Wichita, Kan.—*Anna Groff*

betransformed

"There is something special about reading a biblical story while standing at the location where it happened. For the rest of my life, I will read the Bible differently."

Student baptism in the Jordan River

Karissa Sauder, a member of EMU's cross-cultural group in the Middle East, spring '08.

Read cross-cultural journals and learn about future programs...
emu.edu/crosscultural

800-368-2665 • admiss@emu.edu

EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

Specializing in web development and customized software

The Mennonite
http://www.themennonite.org/
TheMennonite
A semimonthly magazine for members of Mennonite Church USA
Home
The Magazine
Blogs
For Discussion
Subscriptions
Submissions
December news
Podcast

LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

SOOP volunteers offer experiences

Cara Rufenacht

Anna Klitzke, left, a resident in the Goldensun community, visits with Roland Yoder, a volunteer with SOOP.

Plates clinked and conversation flew in the fellowship hall of Trinity Mennonite Church in Phoenix. It was a Monday night, and participants in the SOOP (Service Opportunities for Older People) program gathered to share a meal with members of the Goldensun community, a faith-based organization that provides supportive living communities for adults with developmental disabilities.

Members of the program live in three houses within walking distance of the SOOP house and Trinity Mennonite Church.

About 15 SOOP participants gather each week to share a potluck meal with all the Goldensun households. After eating, the groups sometimes spend time singing and worshiping together.

"The SOOPers and Goldensun residents are such a natural fit," said Aaron Gouldthorpe, director of Goldensun. "The SOOPers bring a wealth of life experience and a deep spirituality to our community, but it goes both ways. Our Goldensun guys bring so much life and help to bring other people's gifts out."

SOOP, a joint Christian service program through Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Association of Retired Persons and Mennonite Central Committee Canada, gives adults of all ages a chance to use their gifts to help others. In Phoenix, volunteers come to serve for varying lengths of time, ranging from several weeks to several months.—*Hannah Heinzekehr for Mennonite Mission Network*

The SOOP program allows participants to choose their own location, time and length of service. For more information or to apply, visit Service.MennoniteMission.net.

AT THE CROSSROADS
PROMISE & PERIL

Mennonite Church USA
Mennonite Church Canada

A PEOPLE'S SUMMIT FOR FAITHFUL LIVING
Theme: Deuteronomy 4: 1-9

July 8-10
Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Manitoba

INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION
For Mennonite Church USA:
summit.mennoniteusa.org

EMM focuses on African-American reps

Group of six had 'emotional time' while visiting former slave-holding place.

Despite linguistic and cultural barriers, differences between Muslims and Christians, and vastly opposing worldviews, a group of African-American visitors to The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau were greeted as long-lost cousins by the Jola and Balanta tribes.

Clair Good, Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) representative to Africa, traveled with a group of five African-Americans led by Bishop Lawrence Chiles of the Koinonia Fellowship of Churches. Members of the group included Anthony Coleman, Christopher Hall, Tynesha Brew and Talita Chiles.

In November 2007, the six-member group visited Denise and Gary Williamson in The Gambia. The Williamsons, workers with EMM, live with the Jola Muslims of Pirang village, while working with a developing church among the displaced Balanta tribe from the Guinea-Bissau region. The Balanta have a traditionally animistic worldview but are open to the gospel. Animism is the belief that spiritual forces and spirits of ancestors are actively involved in controlling lives.

In Pirang, each visitor was assigned to shadow villagers in their roles as carpenters, knitters or tie-dyers or to assist at the local schools or health clinics. During the evening, the men and women of the community came together in a time of dialogue and interaction as they talked about what each had experienced.

The group took a trip to the Gambia River's James Island, a former holding place for slaves. Balanta fisherman carried the group to the island on their fishing boats.

"It was an emotional time," said Good. "As a white person, I felt the weight of the sins of my forefathers. But because of Jesus, we could all travel together as brothers and sisters in Christ."

Chiles and Good led a seminar for church leaders from The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau at the MEHDA (Mennonite Educational and Horticultural Development Associates) Center. Leaders from four different tribes attended seminars titled "Spiritual Encounters" and "Christian Marriage" taught by Chiles and Good.

The group also traveled to see the EMM work in Guinea-Bissau and EMM worker Beryl Forrester. While there, the visiting African-Americans shared their own songs with the villagers.

Chiles spoke to a group of Africans.

"We've come here to find out how God might desire to use us," he said. "We want to be here. Some mission boards say we won't be good missionaries. If we can endure slavery, we can endure being missionaries."

Speaking after the trip was over, Chiles said, "The Koinonia team enjoyed the relationship-building aspect of our time spent in these two regions. And the partnership with EMM missionaries provides future opportunities in mission, as is our desire."

"We at EMM need to mobilize African-Americans within our conference and beyond," Good said. "We need to adjust our practice to incorporate African-Americans and all ethnicities into global missions."—*Linda Moffett of EMM*

Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Contributions Direct

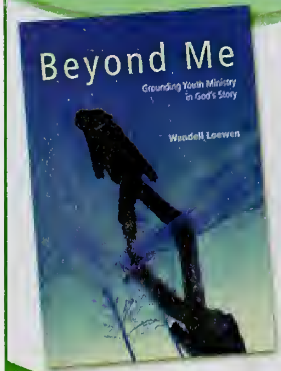
Because we believe in the importance of supporting the church, we make our electronic bill payment program available free if used to make regular, automatic contributions to a church or other charity.

***Contributions Direct:** Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

www.mennonitefinancial.com

New

Beyond Me
Grounding Youth Ministry in God's Story



Inspiration and practical ideas to help youth workers guide youth beyond the consumerism and alienation of today's culture, to God's culture of community, discipleship, and compassion. **$18.99**

"Loewen provides hope and strategy that is theologically solid, congregationally owned, and doable."—Chap Clark, Fuller Theological Seminary

Faith & Life Resources
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

www.mpn.net
Canada: 1 800-631-6535 • USA: 1 800-245-7894

RESOURCES

Consuming Jesus: Beyond Race and Class Divisions in a Consumer Church by Paul Louis Metzger (Eerdmans, 2007, $16) challenges the consumerism that fosters ethnic and economic divisions and distorts evangelical Christianity.

Holy Anger: Jacob, Job, Jesus by Lytta Basset (Eerdmans, 2007, $28) considers anger as something that can transform a potentially devastating energy into a force that brings about rebirth and reawakening.

Stricken by God? Nonviolent Identification and the Victory of Christ, edited by Brad Jersak and Michael Hardin (Eerdmans, 2007, $32), offers fresh perspectives on such questions as these: Did God pour out his wrath against sin on his Son to satisfy his own need for justice? Or did God-in-Christ forgive the world even as it unleashed its wrath against him?

Beloved: Henri Nouwen in Conversation by Henri J.M. Nouwen with Philip Roderick (Eerdmans, 2007, $20) records—in both spoken and written form—a conversation that took place in the summer of 1992 at a retreat center in England. CD is included.

Shared Voices ($10 plus postage) is a booklet from Mennonite Mission Network that outlines the antiracism communication guidelines developed by its communications department. Order from Mennonite Media, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

Celebrating God's Love (DVD, 11 minutes, $6.99) shows how Mennonite Central Committee and its partners have walked with voters in the Democratic Republic of Congo, provided HIV testing in Nigeria and held forums in the United States about alternatives to military service. Order from www.mccstore.org.

The Gospel According to Harry Potter, Revised and Expanded Edition: The Spiritual Journey of the World's Greatest Seeker by Connie Neal (Westminster John Knox Press, 2008, $16.95) expands Neal's earlier book and includes discussion of all seven books. Neal finds "glimmers of the gospel" in these books.

The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief by Francis Collins (Free Press, 2006, $26) combines Collins' work as a medical geneticist and director of the Human Genome Project with his Christian beliefs.

Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists, Vol. I, 1635-1709, transcribed and translated by James Lowry (Ohio Amish Library, 2008, $34.95 plus shipping), presents 82 neglected letters, records and mandates from European archives revealing dynamics of the Swiss Anabaptists' faith, persecutions and migration to America. Order from Ohio Amish Library, Inc., 4292 SR 39, Millersburg, OH 44654, 330-893-4011.

The Geography of Light by Carrie Newcomer (CD, 2008, $17.98) is influenced by the Quaker singer-songwriter's friendships and collaborations with Parker J. Palmer, Jim Wallis, Brian McLaren and Barbara Kingsolver.

The New Conspirators: Creating the Future One Mustard Seed at a Time by Tom Sine (IVP Books, 2008, $15) is a series of conversations about taking new conspirators, culture, the future of God, turbulent times and our imaginations seriously.

Plant a Seed of Peace by Rebecca Seiling, illustrated by Brooke Rothshank (Herald Press, 2008, $15.99), includes 43 illustrated stories of peacemakers from today and the past. It's for children of all ages.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS
FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED
THE CHILDREN OF GOD.
– MATTHEW 5:9

Goshen College's Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies program is built on decades of scholarship, a unique and nationally admired study-abroad program, a community that seeks diversity and Christ-centered core values rooted in the peace church tradition.

You might choose a major or a minor in a peace studies program, enhance another area of study wtih conflict mediation training, sign up for a semester of urban peacemaking study in Indianapolis, join the Pax or Eco-Pax student clubs and engage significant issues with guest speakers as well as your own professors and classmates.

We invite you to visit out welcoming campus to find out more – on your journey as a peacemaker.

GOSHEN
COLLEGE
WWW.GOSHEN.EDU/PEACE

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

CALENDAR

Worldwide Klopfenstein reunion, June 20-21, **Grabill Park Pavilion, Grabill, Ind**. All Klopfenstein and extended families welcome. Bring family history, books, pictures and genealogy records. For more information contact Tom Klopfenstein, TomKlop@comcast.net or Lynn Klopfenstein, Lynn1905@charter.net.

Lancaster Mennonite School will hold a ***Spring Open House*** on Sunday, May 18, for parents and students exploring Christian education at the elementary, middle and high school levels. It will be held at the Lancaster Campus which is located at 2176 Lincoln Highway East. For more information call 717-299-0436, ext. 311.

WORKERS

Blank, William "Bill," was installed as interim pastor at East Petersburg Mennonite Church, East Petersburg, Pa., on March 2.

Cadarette, Dave, was licensed as pastor at Hilltop Mennonite Fellowship, Petoskey, Mich., on April 13.

Scholtz, Marita J., was licensed as associate pastor at Wilkens Avenue Mennonite Church, Baltimore, on Feb. 24.

Scholtz, Todd C., was licensed as lead pastor at Wilkens Avenue Mennonite Church, Baltimore, on Feb. 24.

Sensenig, J. Carl, was ordained as bishop/overseer of the Bowmansville-Reading District of Lancaster (Pa.) Conference on Feb. 10.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Aeschliman, Connor James, March 22, to Quinn and Karla Mast Aeschliman, Chesapeake, Va.

Brenner, Andrew Michael, March 4, to Levi and Kym Lepley Brenner, Massillon, Ohio.

Crilow, Lane Joshua, April 10, to Joshua and Susan Yoder Crilow, Wooster, Ohio.

Gerster Fast, Charles Werner, April 11, to Paul Fast and Marnie Gerster, Waterloo, Ontario.

Grau, Kylee April, March 24, to Eric and Angela Glenn Grau, Lowville, N.Y.

Hunsberger, Dawson Jae, Jan. 18, to Keith and Jennifer Godshall Hunsberger, Sellersville, Pa.

King, Alexis Kennedy, March 29, to Matt and Jennifer Koehn King, Wichita, Kan.

Miller, Grael Elizabeth, April 3, to Ryan and Althea Beachy Miller, Kalona, Iowa.

Miller, Lydia Rose, Feb. 7, to Brent and Megan Stauffer Miller, Grove City, Ohio.

Osterland, Jaden Dean, April 15, to Ben and Lisa Grieser Osterland, Archbold, Ohio.

Ressler, Aubrey Louise, March 28, to Matthew and Laura Groff Ressler, Lancaster, Pa.

Ritchie, Landon James, April 6, to Mike and Amy Friend Ritchie, Middlebury, Ind.

Schlabaugh, Lance Gordon, March 24, to Neil and Anne Schlabaugh, Wellman, Iowa.

Stoltzfus, Nolan Jeffrey, March 31, to Daryl and Kimberly Charles Stoltzfus, Lancaster, Pa.

Walton, Elijah David, March 31, to Dwayne and Amy Brubaker Walton, Lancaster, Pa.

Yoder, Callie Rae, March 21, to Derek and Joy Smith Yoder, Hesston, Kan.

Yoder, Mira Susannah, April 12, to Bob and Pamela Bressler Yoder, Goshen, Ind.

MARRIAGES

Coblentz/Smith: Jared Coblentz, Hartville, Ohio, and Jalayne Smith, April 5, at Community Gospel Church, Bremen, Ind.

Krase/McClurg: Kelli Krase, Kansas City, Kan., and Stan McClurg, Kansas City, April 12, at Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

DEATHS

Ash, Bertha Byler, 91, New Holland, Pa., died Feb. 15 of presumed peritonitis. Spouse: Orval Ash (deceased). Parents: David and Sarah Stoltzfus Byler. Step-children: Jon, Melvin, Ruth Christner; seven grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 18 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

Bender, Ivan I., 86, Kalona, Iowa, died April 7. Spouse: Mattie Miller Bender. Parents: Ira D., and Lena Miller Bender. Children: Marvin, Rufus, Esther Bell, Ezra, Serena Zahradnek, Cecil, Morris; 27 grandchildren; 40 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: April 11 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Bergthold, Reuben H., 94, Reedley, Calif., died March 13. Spouse: Hildur Ahlstrom Bergthold (deceased). Parents: Henry and Marie Mueller Bergthold. Children: Bruce, Dean, Aleta Rempel; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 17 at Reedley Cemetery.

Bontrager, Albert C., 88, Nappanee, Ind., died March 11 following a sudden illness. Spouse: Vivian Celia Blosser Bontrager. Parents: Henry and Clara Schrock Bontrager. Children: Philip, Duane, Kevin; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 14 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind.

Burkholder, John H., 94, Ephrata, Pa., died April 1. Spouse: Minnie Peachey Burkholder (deceased). Parents: Rev. Aaron and Maggie Hostetter Burkholder. Children: Donald, Dennis, Derrill, Dean, Delmar, Rita Sweigart; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 4 at Fairmont Homes, Ephrata.

Cordell, Mary K. Appleby, 89, Marion, Pa., died April 5. Spouse: Glenn A. Cordell. Parents: James A. and Georgia Hollinger Appleby. Children: Glenn R., Leonard A.; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 9 at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa.

Crapo, Martha Graber, 80, Middlebury, Ind., died March 23. Spouse: Burton E. Crapo (deceased). Parents: Abe and Katie Marner Graber. Children: William, Robert, Edward, Ronald; one grandson, two step-

timely tip:
Check your smoke alarms!

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business.

Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

grandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Cripe, Agnes Lucille, 92, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 6. Parents: Henry H. and Mary Defreese Cripe. Memorial service: May 10 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Eby, Lydia Pearl Heishman, 86, Harrisonburg, Va., died March 31. Spouse: Martin Z. Eby. Parents: Abram G. and Pearl Heishman. Children: Ralph, James; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 4 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Friesen, Viola Violet Graber, 99, Reedley, Calif., died March 21. Spouse: Arthur Friesen. Parents: Ben C. and Lena Schrag Graber. Children: Richard, Delbert; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Galle, Mourine Mae Vogt, 89, Moundridge, Kan., died April 12. Spouse: Gilbert D. Galle (deceased). Parents: Wesley D. and Anna K. Fast Vogt. Children: Bruce, Brent, Marcia Gitchell, Brian; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 17 at West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge.

Gingerich, Clarence "Pete," 84, Wellman, Iowa, April 7. Spouse: Marjorie Rhodes Gingerich. Parents: Charles and Nettie Miller Gingerich. Children: Ed Gingerich; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa.

Guengerich, Myrtle Violet Tompkins, 97, Kalona, Iowa, died April 11. Spouse: Earl Guengerich (deceased). Foster parents: Milton and Fannie Zook. Children: LaWayne, Judith Yoder, Wilson, Lily Miller, Calvin, Marilyn Guengerich; nine grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 15 at Peterseim Funeral Home, Kalona.

Hertzler, Rev. Joseph Shenk, 75, Goshen, Ind. Spouse: Mary Beyeler Hertzler (deceased). Parents: Asa and Rebecca Shenk Hertzler Buskirk. Children: Julia Angelos, Teresa Jantz; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 17 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Jorgensen, Leon Alvin, 88, Freeman, S.D., died March 23. Spouse: Cleo Kaufman Jorgensen. Parents: Chris and Marie Lauridsen Jorgensen. Children: Brenda Gust, Cindy Aman, June Nancy Jorgensen; six grandchildren. March 27 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Kulp, Irwin A., 88, Harleysville, Pa., died March 4. Spouse: Elizabeth M. Leatherman Kulp. Spouse: Irma Yothers Kulp (deceased). Parents: Jacob H. and Sallie Alderfer Kulp. Children: Lester L., Wilson, Daniel L., Timothy L., Stephen L., Michael L., Elaine Worthington, Florence West, Lucy Mohring, Rhoda Leh, Elizabeth Anne Kulp; 20 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 7 at Deep Run Mennonite Church, Perkasie, Pa.

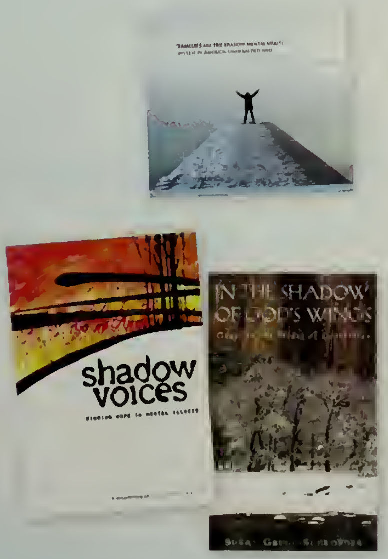
Lichti, Elsie Anna Heer, 88, Reedley, Calif., died April 3 of pneumonia. Spouse: Herb Lichti. Parents: Christian and Alvena Heer. Children: Fran Loewen, Jim, Christie, Irvin James; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 12 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Metzler, Mary W., 101, Lititz, Pa., died March 25. Parents: Samuel B. and Anna Mary Weaver Metzler. Funeral: March 29 at Stradling Funeral Home, Akron, Pa.

Regehr, Curt L., 92, North Newton, Kan., died April 13. Spouse: Marie Ediger Regehr. Parents: George and Mary Pauls Regehr. Children: Judith Collicott, Jerry, Donovan, Curtiss, Wesley; 13 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Schell, Rosella M. Baer, 91, Milledgeville, Ill., died March 17. Spouse: John Thomas Schell (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Katie Schrock Baer. Children: William Joseph, John M., Gloria M. Jost; six grandchildren; three step-grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 30 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling, Ill.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA.



MAY IS MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS MONTH

Be listening for RADIO SPOTS on mental illness from the Mennonite churches: *Unsung: Family Voices on Mental Illness* or hear them at *Third Way Café* www.thirdway.com/rad

FOR MORE RESOURCES ON MENTAL ILLNESS:

- *Shadow Voices: Finding Hope in Mental Illness* DVD (includes study guide, bonus content for small groups and Sunday school classes) $24.95*
- *In the Shadow of God's Wings: Grace in the Midst of Depression* book $10* (separate study guide also available for $7)
- Worship resources and more at www.ShadowVoices.com

* Shipping and handling extra

FOR MORE INFORMATION
(800) 999-3534

Mennonite Media
1251 Virginia Avenue
Harrisonburg VA 22802
www.mennomedia.org

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St.,
Goshen, IN
46526-4794

Schmidt, Elsie Boese, 88, Goessel, Kan., died April 12 of a stroke. Spouse: Elmer Schmidt. Parents: A.L. and Maria Schroeder Boese. Children: Janice Worthington, Diana Roberts, Glen, Jerilyn; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 15 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel.

Schmidt, Ethel Ellen, 88, Walton, Kan., died April 12. Parents: Rudolf B. and Susie Voth Schmidt. Funeral: April 28 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan.

Schmucker, Herbert F., 84, Louisville, Ohio, died March 31. Parents: Daniel and Lella Schloneger Schmucker. Funeral: Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Schrag, Doug, 60, Marion, S.D., died April 1. Spouse: Candace Schrag. Parents: Paul and Ada Gering Schrag. Children: Tammy Benjamin, Cory; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 4 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Schrock, Herman Monroe, 83, Harrisonburg, Va., died April 12. Spouse: Katherine Blough Schrock. Parents: Samuel E. and Katie C. Miller Schrock. Children: Darrel, Linda S. Schrock, Sonya K. Carrier; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Short, Ruth, 95, Archbold, Ohio, died April 9. Parents: Aaron and Sarah Rupp Short. Funeral: April 12 at Fairlawn Haven Nursing Home Chapel, Archbold.

Short, Willard L., 91, Archbold, Ohio, died March 22. Spouse: Marie Short. Parents: Henry and Eliza Eicher Short. Children: Gary, Aden J., four grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. March 26 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Sommers, Susie Keim, 85, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 7. Spouse: Wayne D. Sommers. Parents: Abe and Susan Troyer Keim. Children: Wayne Arlee, Darrel, Lorraine Reinford, Fern Delagrange, Dallas; 14 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 10 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Spotts, David, 23, Linville, Va., died March 30 of lupus. Spouse: Rachel Aeschliman Spotts. Parents: Craig and Marilyn Stuckey Spotts. Funeral: April 6 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Stoltzfus, Sterling William, 82, Kalona, Iowa, died April 8. Spouse: Myrtle Sutter Stoltzfus. Parents: John and Laura Beckler Stoltzfus. Children: Ruth Boller, Donna Wyse, Jane King, Philip, Barb Graber; 17 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Tiessen, Grace Charlotte Miller, 91, Kalona, Iowa, died March 13. Spouse: Gerhard Tiessen (deceased). Parents: Leroy and Lydia Troyer Miller. Children: John; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Weaver, Ada B. Huber, 95, Lititz, Pa., died April 17. Spouse: Paul E. Weaver (deceased). Children: Kenneth L., Donald L., James L., Paul E.; 10 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 21 at Landis Homes, Lititz.

Widmer, Doris Claudine Cowles, 94, Bloomfield, Iowa. Spouse: Harlan Ramseyer Widmer (deceased). Parents: David Clarence and Emma Laura Slonaker Cowles. Children: David; two grandchildren. Funeral: April 9 at Pulaski Mennonite Church, Pulaski, Iowa.

Witmer, Fern Weaver, 87, Goshen, Ind., died April 4. Spouse: Anson Witmer. Parents: Oscar and Inez Weaver. Children: Betty Weldy, Donald, Devon, Marvin, Carl; 19 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 7 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE

ENGAGED · EVANGELICAL · ANABAPTIST

- Accredited education at affordable rates
- An Associate Degree in Biblical Studies
- Nine areas of concentration
- Christ-centered community
- Cross-cultural study terms

LAY A SURE FOUNDATION

SMALL COLLEGE, BIG IMPACT

www.rosedale.edu • 740-857-1311 • Rosedale, Ohio

Eastern Mennonite University is seeking qualified applicants for the position of ***director of career services and clinical counselor***. 80-90 percent of the position provides leadership and direction to a comprehensive career development program. Ten-20 percent assists the director of counseling services with mental-health counseling and supervision of master's-student counseling trainees. Master's degree in counseling, career services, student personnel or related area with license eligibility as a mental health provider in Virginia preferred. Experience in career services or equivalent, knowledge of college student development and evidence of administrative competence. Ability to relate to and communicate effectively with various groups. Salary dependent upon education and experience in accordance with the administration pay scale. Submit letter of application, resumé and three references to: StuLifeSearch@emu.edu. For more information visit our Web site at www.emu.edu. People who bring diversity are encouraged to apply. EOE.

Director of instrumental music, **Bethel College**, North Newton, Kan. Duties would include conducting, coordinating and recruiting for the wind ensemble and orchestra program, teaching private lessons in the candidate's major performance area, music education in methods, instrumental techniques classes or other courses based on qualifications and departmental needs. See http://www.bethelks.edu/hr/openings/ for complete application details. AA/EOE.

Park View Federal Credit Union, Harrisonburg, Va., is seeking a ***marketing manager***, responsible for the development, implementation and ongoing evaluation of the credit union's strategic marketing plan. Visit www.pvfcu.org for a position description or contact Yvonne Boettger, HR Manager, for more information at 540-434-6444 or careers@pvfcu.org.

Pastor needed: **Mountain Community Mennonite Church**, located in Palmer Lake, Colo., is looking for a ***full-time pastor***. We are a small church in the Mountain States Conference located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. See our Web site at www.mcmc-pl.org. For more information, please contact our conference minister: Herm Weaver at 303-258-7589.

Eastern Mennonite University is seeking qualified applicants for the position ***director of multicultural student services***. This position provides leadership and services for AHANA (African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, Native American) and international students. The director facilitates university-wide diversity enrichment initiatives. Master's degree in a field of student affairs or related area or bachelor's degree and progressively responsible related experience. Proficiency in managing a budget and strong working knowledge of multicultural issues in higher education and relevant experience in working with AHANA and/or international populations. Must have analytical abilities and communicate effectively in a second language, preferably Spanish. Computer literate with word processing and spreadsheet competencies. People who have extensive cross-cultural experience are particularly encouraged to apply. Salary dependent upon education and experience in accordance with the admin pay scale. Submit letter of application, resumé and three references to: StuLifeSearch@emu.edu. For more information visit our Web site at www.emu.edu. EOE.

Highland Retreat, Bergton, Va., celebrates 50 years in 2008. All former staff (summer and year-round) and board members are invited to a ***Reunion Weekend, June 20-22***. Check the schedule of events and download a brochure at www.highlandretreat.org. Phone 540-852-3226. Email info@highlandretreat.org.

MCC urgently seeks applicants for MCC Program Reps

1. **West Europe** - Bonn, Germany
2. **Former Soviet Union** - Zaporozhye, Ukraine

MCC Reps provide the program leadership for MCC's international work. They have primary responsibility for bridge-building, collaboration and liaison work with the various Mennonite and other churches in the region. They manage distribution of material aid, develop opportunities to enhance peace programming and provide support for MCC workers in the field.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership, and nonviolent peacemaking.

Contact your local MCC for more information.
Call Toll Free in Canada: 1 888 622 6337
Call Toll Free in US: 1 888 563 4676
View job descriptions on the web at: mcc.org

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2008 TOURS

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND and WALES (June 25-July 7)
EXPLORING SWISS-GERMAN FAMILY ROOTS in EUROPE - EUROPEAN HERITAGE (August 25-September 7)
BUS TOUR to PENNSYLVANIA - SIGHT & SOUND (September 25-28)
CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)
TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)
FOLLOWING the STEPS of MOSES (November 2-14)
MWC GLOBAL CHURCH TOUR with LARRY & ELEANOR MILLER (November 10-24)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-19)
MWC #1 - BRAZIL, IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY (July 2-20)
MWC #2 - CHILE, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY (July 5-20)
MWC #3 - IGUAZU FALLS and PARAGUAY (July 9-20)
MWC #4 - IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY, PERU (July 10-24)
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and BOLIVIA (July 12-25)
MWC #6 - IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY, PERU (July 12-29)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (August 1-15)
MENNONITE STORY in POLAND (September 15-23)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (Oct. 24-Nov. 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (Jan. 3-13)
CHURCHES AND SAFARIS in KENYA and TANZANIA (February 9-20)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE TOUR (June 4-17)

2010 TOURS

CHECK WEB SITE FOR TOURS INCLUDING OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

CEO: **Kings View Behavioral Health System** seeks ***CEO*** to lead its large, multisite, Mennonite-founded organization in Fresno, Calif. Their health services include mental health, chemical dependency, drug treatment/prevention and services for developmentally disabled. Qualified candidates will have senior leadership experience in large organizations, strong financial knowledge, ability to develop productive work culture consistent with organizational values, board experience and passion for the organizational mission. Behavioral health experience preferred but will consider other disciplines with strong executive skill sets. Candidates contact Kirk Stiffney with MHS Alliance at kirk@stiffneygroup.com or 574-537-8736.

Executive director: **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center**, a 600-acre camp, conference and retreat center located in SW Pa., seeks ED. Qualified candidates will need a deep commitment to organization's mission, administrative expertise with budgeting, board relations, staff development, gift of hospitality, and ability to cultivate financial support. Candidates contact Kirk Stiffney with MHS Alliance at kirk@stiffneygroup.com or 574-537-8736.

Executive director. **Menno-Hof** in Shipshewana, Ind., is a vibrant Amish/Mennonite interpretive center celebrating 20 years of successful operation. Looking for an executive director to exhibit creativity and work with the board of directors to expand and refine vision for the future. Desired qualifications: strong knowledge of the Anabaptist faith tradition; ability to communicate issues of faith and culture passionately. Complete job description at www.mennohof.org. Send resumés or inquiries to Leanne Farmwald c/o Menno-Hof, 510 S Van Buren St., Shipshewana, IN 46565 or lfarmwald@aol.com .

Coming to **Montreal** for school or vacation? Support a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada project while enjoying Montreal's trendy "Plateau" district by staying at ***Maison de l'amitié Summer Guestrooms and Student residence***. Student housing available for September. 514-843-4356, www.residencema.ca, reservations@maisondelamitie.ca.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

The department of nursing at **Goshen College** in Goshen, Ind., is looking to fill two nursing faculty positions. The first position is a ***full-time gerontology and medical-surgical nursing position*** in classroom, simulated laboratory and clinical settings. Second position is in conjunction with Goshen Health System seeking to fill a ***faculty and clinical nursing research position***. Duties include classroom teaching at the undergraduate and graduate level for Goshen College and clinical nursing research at Goshen Health System. Doctorate in nursing is required. The ideal candidate will bring To the job significant experience in nursing research, nursing education and nursing practice. To apply: Visit the position announcements at www.goshen.edu/employment. Goshen College and Goshen Health System are each committed to the development of a diverse work force.

First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, seeks ***full-time associate pastor of youth ministries and pastoral care*** with start date November 2008 or later. Women and minorities encouraged to apply. Please contact IN-MI Conference Minister Tim Lichti (tim@im.mennonite.net) for information.

MARP – older adults living with spirit

Persons 50 and above begin to experience greater independence and flexibility as financial and family obligations change and personal, professional, and investment goals are achieved. If you find yourself anywhere on this continuum, consider joining MARP today.

Benefits Include:

- **Pages:** quarterly newsletter offers articles, helpful information, and engaging activities promoting interaction, community, and networking opportunities
- **Web Site:** offers specific information related to MARP programs and activities and relevant information and links for members and the general public
- **SOOP:** offers services opportunities at more than 60 locations in North America
- **Aging with Spirit Retreats:** a three day event that includes spirited worship, invigorating input, lively interaction, and networking among participants
- **Mennonite Sports & Fitness Classic:** promotes health and fitness through age-appropriate athletic activities while downplaying competition

Mennonite Association of Retired Persons

Join the several thousand persons who are already MARP members!
Membership rates at one address (check one):

LIFETIME	3 YEAR	1 YEAR
__one $300	__one $40	__one $20
__two $400	__two $60	__two $30

Submit contact info and payment to:
MARP, 23 Homestead Drive,
Lancaster, PA 17602

New MCC DVD

A SEASON OF HOPE

2007 | 22 mins. | English, French, Spanish
English subtitles | For grade 10 to adult

Increased stress on the land, water and food supply in southern Chad have caused conflict between farmers and herders. See how MCC is joining with food security organizations and a conflict resolution program, to insure every person a nutritious diet and creative ways to share limited resources with their neighbors.

Purchase at mccstore.org
Borrow at mcc.org/catalog
Canada 888-622-6337
U.S. 888-563-4676

Goshen College, Goshen, Ind., is seeking a ***director of the student wellness and health center*** with duties set to begin August 2008. The applicant should be a Certified Nurse Practitioner and a graduate of an accredited advance practice/nurse practitioner program. The primary duties and responsibilities are: provide clinical services to students, administer the operations of the center and provide support for international programs. Three years experience in a health setting preferred. Goshen College is a small (about 1,000 students), liberal arts institution affiliated with Mennonite Church USA. Goshen, Ind., is located in northern Indiana about 30 minutes from South Bend, Ind., and about 2 1/2 hours east of Chicago. To apply, please visit http://www.goshen.edu/employment/ Goshen College is an affirmative action employer.

"Along The Way," a memoir about volunteering with MVS, by Joanne Murray. $12.99 plus shipping. To order 253-page paperback, visit www.masthof.com

Hesston College seeks a ***development officer*** for Midwest region as member of team responsible for fund-raising for annual fund, capital campaigns and endowment; includes additional strategic focus with young alumni. Qualifications include integrity, relational skills, marketing mentality, passion for the mission of Hesston College and knowledge of Mennonite Church USA. Preferred background in successful fund-raising and/or marketing with bachelor's degree in relevant field. Reports to the VP of Development. Send resumé and letter of interest to Yvonne Sieber, VP of Development, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062, or email yvonnes@hesston.edu. EOE.

Service Adventure needs ***unit leaders*** in Johnstown, Pa., Philippi, W.V., and Raleigh, N.C. Leaders should be at least 24 years old and will minister with young adults (ages17-20) as you live in community and serve the local community and church. Visit our Web site at Service.MennoniteMission.net and follow the Service Adventure links, call toll-free at 1-866-866-2872, or email Service@MennoniteMission.net.

Salem Mennonite Church, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alta. (45 minutes southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0; fax: 780-662-0106; email salemchurch@live.ca.

Additional positions open at **Western Mennonite School**:

Applications for the first two positions are open until Aug. 1, 2008, or until the position is filled. ***Food services director***: 10-month, full-time position, beginning August. Responsible for preparing daily menus and meals that adhere to state and federal guidelines for daily nutritional needs, managing the food services program, training and supervising food services staff and coordinating, as necessary, food for special occasions and functions. Must hold or be able to get an Oregon Food Handler's license. Contact Pat Rausch at 503-363-2000 or prausch@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Dorm director:10-month, full-time position. Western seeks a candidate to serve as dorm director for its high school dorm program, beginning August. Must be willing to work with and enjoy students from other cultures, promote a positive Christ-centered community and lead others by being a positive role model. Responsibilities include mentoring dorm staff and students, enforcing rules, planning and supervising activities. Management experience preferred. Contact Zig Derochowski at 503-363-2000 or zderochowski@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Applications for the following position are open until May 12 or until the position is filled.

Western seeks an ***alumni relations coordinator***, beginning in June, to help strengthen Western's alumni and friends network. Responsibilities include organizing fun and effective events and assisting in the development of communications, including the development and updating of Western's online community. The coordinator will work with a team to cultivate relationships among alumni and friends to encourage their involvement in the school's Christ-centered mission. The ideal candidate will be a positive, high-energy team leader with superior oral and written communication skills, proficient knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet and database software with ability to manage multiple projects and organize events. Western alum preferred. Contact Andrea Wall at 503-363-2000 or adwall@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Western Mennonite School, established in 1945, offers grades 6-12 to local students and students from around the world. Located on 45 acres in Oregon's Willamette Valley, Western offers a strong academic and faith-building experience. Western seeks exceptional candidates with a heart for youth and sharing Christ.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

Opportunities for psychiatrists in a faith-based environment

Oaklawn, a major mental health provider in the midwest, seeks both a child and adolescent psychiatrist and an adult psychiatrist to join our multidisciplinary staff.

- Located in Goshen, Indiana, a mid-sized rural community
- Two hours from Chicago and three hours from Indianapolis
- Community offers a cost of living 17.6% below national average
- Faith-based heritage; sponsored by Mennonite Health Services Alliance
- Competitive salary, RVU-based incentive, signing bonus, relocation expense, student loan forgiveness
- Call of 1:6 weekends and one weekday every two weeks

To learn about Oaklawn, visit our web site at www.oaklawn.org.
For more information about these positions, contact Human Resources at 1-800-282-0809, ext. 675. All inquiries kept confidential.

OAKLAWN
Toward Health and Wholeness

330 Lakeview Drive, PO Box 809
Goshen, Indiana 46527

Threshold crossings

Sara Wenger Shenk is an author and serves as associate dean and associate professor of Christian practices at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

In March I stood in a familiar yet electric space: at the arrival gate for passengers coming off international flights at Dulles International Airport in Washington. One of our sons was returning from a trip to Africa. Last month, my husband stood in the same space. Another son was returning from a trip to central Asia.

Sometimes I feel I could map the story of my life by the times I've either waited for someone I love to walk through those opaque, swinging doors or walked through them myself into the eager arms of those I love.

Standing amid that hubbub of anticipation in March, I came alive. What a microcosm of the world—a swirl of languages, colors, craning necks and radar eyes. Every time the door swung open, like search beacons we zoomed in. Was this the one we were waiting for? Then from a corner of the crowd there was a shriek, a glad shout, arms waving with joy, a rush to meet a new arrival. Other greetings were quiet, intense hugs between two people laden with who knows how many long weeks/months/years of longing. Some were big family affairs, with children leaping into arms, exclamations of surprise all around. Some people looked disoriented, perhaps arriving for the first time in this strange country. Some looked travel weary but on spotting a familiar face in the blur lit up like a light bulb, radiating enormous smiles. Some greeters stood nonchalantly on the edge with signs, waiting to pick up a person they'd never met before.

I would love to know the stories that lay behind the many poignant reunions. There's something about these in-between times, these threshold crossings that, like a microscope, sharpens the focus on what matters most about relationships. The airport arrivals gate has become for me a metaphor of life's transitions in general; those passages that bring into intense awareness how much we need each other. How much we want to be recognized, to touch, connect, hold and be held. Weary travelers want to know if we'll be there for them with open arms.

Weary travelers want to know if we'll be there for them with open arms.

I remember, as a young 12-year-old, arriving from Ethiopia to the recently renamed JFK airport with my parents and brothers in 1966. For three long years we'd been separated from my three older sisters. And the moment we'd thought would never come was finally upon us. As we waited to get through customs, we happened to look up, and there above us, looking down through plate-glass windows, were my three older sisters, waving excitedly. Soon all of us were exclaiming and pointing, "Look, look." We couldn't contain our joy. I remember glowing, standing tall in my bright new Ethiopian dress with its beautiful embroidered border, worn just to greet my long-lost sisters.

I remember when I returned from a college semester in Europe during which my now husband and I carried on an animated and life-changing correspondence. I have a vivid picture of the moment I walked through the opaque, swinging door at JFK. One person had placed himself prominently at the forefront of those waiting to greet the arrivals. He walked toward me with shining eyes and clasped me in a full embrace. My shyness kicked in, assuring that the hug was brief, but I rather liked his chutzpah—and still do, mostly.

On Dec. 21, 1988, my husband and I and young children traveled from the former Yugoslavia to the United States for Christmas with our families and for a job interview. When we arrived in New York, my father greeted us with special warmth. He asked whether we'd heard about the Pan Am flight that went down that day over Lockerbie, Scotland. We were shocked to learn of the crash and even more sobered when we reflected how, during a travel delay earlier that day, we'd tried to reroute with Pam Am through Frankfurt, which could have put us on that plane.

We cross all kinds of thresholds in life that bring what matters most in life into stark relief. When we're separated from each other, we gain fresh perspective on how precious family relationships are. While we leapfrog across continents with surreal speed, we're reminded just how fragile our connections are. The awareness of our vulnerability throbs most intensely on the threshold of departures and arrivals. Will we be all right without those we love nearby? Will the strength of our relationship endure the changes? Will we recognize each other when we meet again? Will we be there for each other?

I don't want to read too much into an airport arrivals gate, but it does focus for me a poignant moment in our human journey and that most urgent question, Will you be there for me no matter what? After we risk the journey to the distant land, to the unknown place—whether our trip succeeds or we come home wearily dragging our baggage—will we be there for each other with glad embrace and reassuring grace? TM

INTRODUCING...

The Courtship of Nellie Fisher

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
BEVERLY LEWIS
The Forbidden
A NOVEL
The Courtship of Nellie Fisher
· Book 2 ·
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
BEVERLY LEWIS
The Parting
A NOVEL
The Courtship of Nellie Fisher
· Book 1 ·

From the *New York Times* Bestselling Author

BEVERLY LEWIS

Based on actual events that caused a split in a Pennsylvania Old Order church, THE COURTSHIP OF NELLIE FISHER follows Nellie Fisher, a passionate, if stubborn, girl who may lose her beloved Caleb to the church rift. Yet if she follows Caleb, she may lose her family. Determined to stay together, Nellie and Caleb continue to meet, but at what cost?

THE COURTSHIP OF NELLIE FISHER by Beverly Lewis
1-The Parting • *2-The Forbidden*
3-The Longing (coming mid-September 2008!)

BETHANYHOUSE

www.bethanyhouse.com
Available at your local bookstore or by calling 1-866-241-6733

*****************************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 881 15-DEC-09 36 33
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

Present in God's presence

May 11 is Pentecost Sunday. This will be a good day to reflect again on how God's Spirit can be visited upon each of us. Given the many anxieties in the church and in the world, it will also be a time to ask what it means to be present in God's presence when we are distracted by our fears and anxieties.

Before his crucifixion and death, Jesus promised his followers that God's Spirit would come upon them to give them encouragement and comfort. The second chapter in Acts describes the day this happened.

"From heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind. ... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability," says parts of Acts 2:2,4.

I have never spoken in "other languages" given me by the Spirit. When I was younger, I thought this meant I was inferior in my spiritual life. However, on several rare occasions I've been in worship services and heard people speaking in tongues. Each time I felt a rare warmth and somehow knew implicitly—but couldn't put into words—the praise and adoration carried by those strange words.

It is difficult to relax into the comfort and encouragement provided by God's Spirit when we are anxious and tense about so many things.

I have experienced God's Spirit filling me on some wonderful occasions. When it happens, I wonder why I can't let myself yield to this Presence more often. That's what I'll think about on Pentecost Sunday this year: how to let myself be present in God's presence.

One of the questions my spiritual companion asks me every two or three weeks focuses on this practice. The question: How have you experienced God's grace since we last talked?

Unfortunately, I usually have to confess the same answer over the last 12 years: I did not get out of the way often enough to let God's Spirit fully shape and infuse my life. Consequently, I was not as able to receive and experience God's grace as much as I wish.

The irony is that on those rare occasions that I can yield myself to God's Spirit, the experiences are powerful and sometimes stunning. Blessed things happen; others notice it. Best of all, I have no need to take credit for it.

But there are so many distractions and diversions that push us to stay in control. It is difficult to relax into the comfort and encouragement provided by God's Spirit when we are anxious and tense about many things. Here are just a few worries about which I am distracted—and, consequently, do not yield to God's presence:

- I worry about the U.S. economy and whether the current recession will be short or long.
- I worry about our young adult children and whether the choices and patterns they establish will bring them closer to God and the church.
- I worry about the rancor and vitriol surrounding U.S. election politics—and the way those poisons creep into and defile congregational life.
- I worry about the angst among many people who work within the agencies of Mennonite Church USA—including our staff—who were stunned by the March 19 proposal to reorganize.
- I worry about my congregation that is in a transition process to find a new lead pastor.

Many of these worries may be similar to yours. So what can we do this Pentecost season, which starts on May 11?

None of these worries—and many others not listed or imagined—are too big for God. After Jesus' life, ministry, death and resurrection, God knew we would need to be comforted. God knew we would need an element of God's own being to sustain us.

At Pentecost, God sent this Spirit to be present with us and provide courage, joy and shalom. It is a spiritual discipline to attend to these visits. But it requires an acquiescent spirit on our parts to receive such a presence and to let God's essence emanate through us.

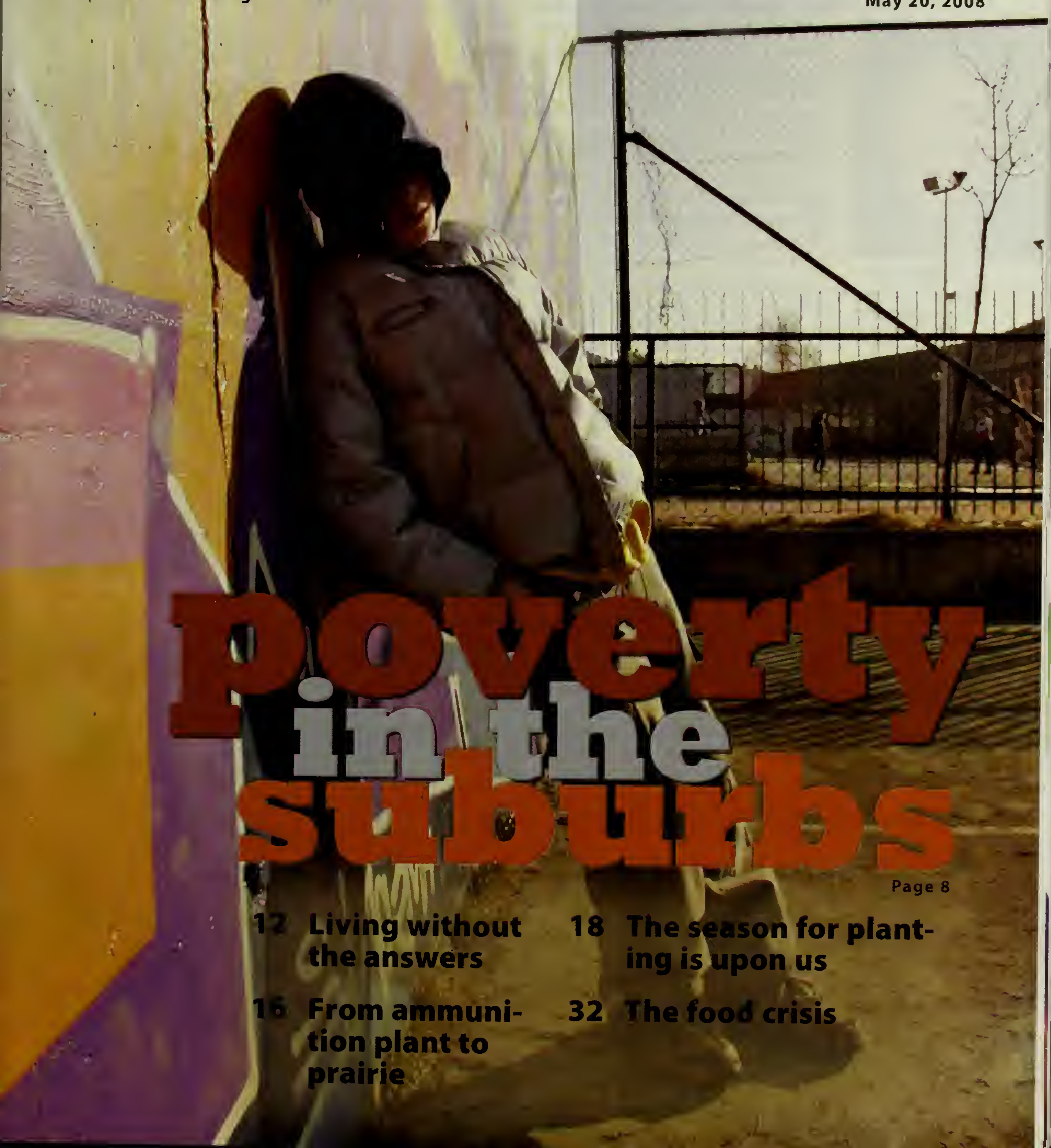
On May 11, the beginning of the Pentecost season, we can all yield ourselves again to this great gift waiting for us whenever we accept it.—*ejt*

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

May 20, 2008



poverty in the suburbs

Page 8

12 Living without the answers

16 From ammunition plant to prairie

18 The season for planting is upon us

32 The food crisis

Release and growth

Rachel Gerber formerly served as associate pastor of faith formation at First Mennonite Church in Denver.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

A man planted a fig tree in his garden and came again and again to see if there was any fruit on it, but he was always disappointed. Finally, he said to his gardener, "I've waited three years and there hasn't been a single fig! Cut it down. It's taking up space we can use for something else." The gardener answered, "Give it one more chance. Leave it another year, and I'll give it special attention and plenty of fertilizer. If we get figs next year, fine. If not, you can cut it down."—Luke 13:6-9 NLT

These are difficult words to hear. It's not the part of the Bible I necessarily enjoy reading. Such passages create a picture of a harsh reality of toeing some narrow line of good behavior.

God here takes the form of a vindictive, ax-poised, macho God waiting with anticipation for one slight slip that will send us to the fire. Sort of like *Dominator*, the huge gladiator on the prime-time show *American Gladiators*. It's the picture of God that perhaps most of us grew up with, were scared by and are now trying to heal from.

Or is it? I still don't like these texts much. But it makes me pause and consider where I am in the story. It challenges me to consider areas of barrenness and growth in my own life.

And maybe that is a good thing. The longer I sit, listen and wait, the more I wonder if this Scripture isn't saying something else. Perhaps this isn't so much about works or good deeds, about toeing a narrow line so that our eternal salvation can be secured as it is about our life here and now.

When we listen to these texts, it's about all the potential the tree in the garden has. It's not dead. It doesn't even say that it's sick or diseased or failing in another way. It just wasn't producing fruit. It wasn't living fully what it was created to be. It was living a partial dream. It was holding onto stagnant branches because, perhaps, it always had. It was easy, comfortable. Or perhaps it didn't want to let go for fear of disappointing someone else's expectations or for fear of the unknown. Would something emerge in its place? Maybe the tree was desperately trying to produce fruit but didn't realize that holding on to the other stuff was getting in the way of living its dream.

This makes me ask: What am I holding on to? What branches in my life do I cling to? Each of us clings to things that prevent us from living out our potential, from bearing fruit in all seasons of life, from living out God's dreams for our lives?

Nelson Mandela in his 1994 inaugural address names our need for releasing well:

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that almost frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There is nothing enlightening about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

We release, not only for our sake but for the sake of the world. We release to bear fruit abundantly, not only to feed ourselves but to feed others. And we feed others by letting them see us living fully out of the core of who we are—who God created us to be—and in turn invite others to do the same. For the gift of releasing and the hope of fruit in a season to come, thanks be to God. TM

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 10, May 20, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church USA

CONTENTS

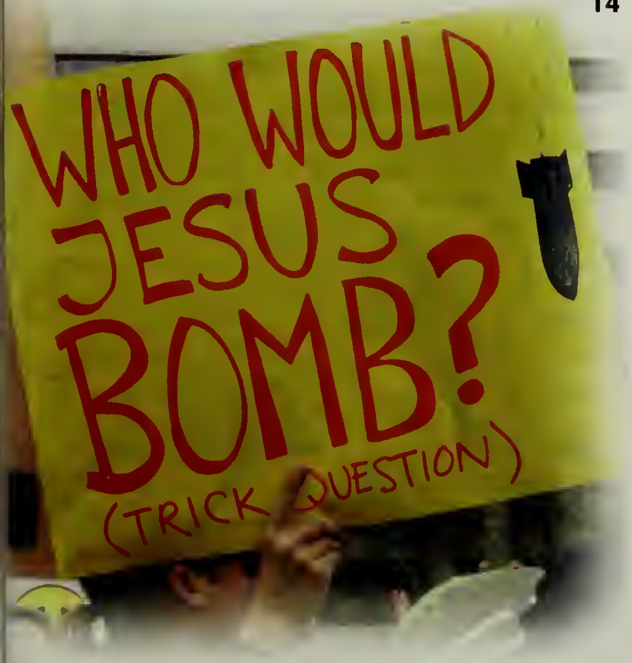
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

MAY 21 '08

6

20

12



14

8 Poverty in the suburbs
God's call to reach out to the poor may lead us to our neighbors.—*Valerie Weaver-Zercher*

12 Living without the answers
God's answers to our questions may lead us to a deeper faith.—*Kenneth L. Gibble*

14 Visualizing nonviolence
Reflections on coercion, force and violence—*J. Denny Weaver*

16 From army ammunition plant to prairie
A story of healing—*David Serafy-Cox*

19 MCC launches Myanmar cyclone appeal
Mennonite Central Commitee committing $100,000 to relief and recovery—*Tim Shenk*

20 1,145 students in five MC USA schools in commencement exercises by May 4

23 Seminary library first with green rating
Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary hosts two-day building dedication.—*Mary E. Klassen*

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Release and growth—*Rachel Gerber*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Leadership
The time for planting is upon us—*Sharon Waltner*

24 For the record

30 Mediaculture
Clearly the product of intelligent design—*Steve Carpenter*

32 Editorial
The food crisis—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Dreamstime.com

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Love others but not their sins

I don't own a typewriter so I will try to write legibly. I found the last issue (April 15) very interesting. I agreed with almost everything. But the one about there being no tribe of Joseph, I'd have to think about more closely (Speaking Out). The other articles I find challenging and thought provoking.

I heartily agree with both Myron Augsburger's article ("Evangelism in a Multireligious Society") and Victor J. Sensenig's ("Christ and the New Atheism"). We need to learn how to relate to other people in order to "accept" them in the sense that we can love them—though not their sins or "lifestyle." Jesus did this with the "woman at the well," a social outcast of society.—*Anne Moyer, Lansdale, Pa.*

Donors want personal relationship

I am concerned to read of the MC USA Executive Board's latest actions regarding their concept for fund-raising. Denominationally we have tried several unified giving plans in the last 25 years. I wonder if another unified plan will produce different results. Donors like to see how their money is being used to make a difference in people's lives. Donors respond passionately for ministries where there is a personal relationship with them.—*Susan Gingerich, Perkasie, Pa.*

Response is ominous and foreboding

With keen interest, I began reading "CLC Responds to Executive Board Action" (April 15). I was startled and dismayed when I read the reported apology, "We're sorry; please get over it." From this distance and in the context of almost six decades of various national and international leadership roles and experience in conflict resolution, the response was ominous and foreboding for an amicable resolution. I ask, "Have we exchanged discernment by the Anabaptist/Mennonite faith community with *ex cathedra* pronouncements?" —*Paul T. Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Changing congregations OK

Anna Groff presented six valid reasons in her editorial why young adults leave the church, "Some Young Adults Stay, Some Go" (April 15). I was grateful that no criticism or judgement was implied. It saddens me that the same freedom is not extended to those Mennonites choosing to change congregations within the Mennonite church. Let us not become possessive of our members, but rather free them to find God in whatever setting meets their spiritual needs. It's not a competition. It's a way to Jesus.—*Joyce Hunsberger, Telford, Pa.*

Using hymn number '606'

Regarding "606: When, Why and How do Mennonites use the Anthem?" (March 18): We sing "606" (even though it's 118 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*) in our church often. In fact, our youth group often asks to sing it when they lead the church service. I don't think it's going to disappear from our "repertoire" any time soon.

My most memorable experience singing it was last summer at the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in July. I was part of a choir that was organized specifically for the assembly and gave a concert at the Westminster Abbey in Mission—a fully functioning Catholic monastery just outside Abbotsford, B.C. It is a rare thing for outside groups to "take over" their amazing worship space; but the Abbot made an exception in this case. It was amazing to hear it sung a cappella in that cathedral. The Abbot himself had tears in his eyes, as did I.—*Angelika Dawson, music coordinator Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C.*

It's fascinating to know that "606" was popularized at the Mennonite Conference at Turner, Ore., in 1969 and that it became a "Mennonite identity piece." What was missing in the article ("606: When, Why and How do Mennonites use the Anthem?" March 18) was the recognition that "The Dedication Anthem," also known as "Praise God From Whom," was sung by Mennonites and others in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia for well over a century.

As noted, the song appeared in the Harmonia Sacra, known as the oldest book by English hymns in continuous use in America. The first printing was by Joseph Funk at nearby Singers Glen, Va.,

IN THIS ISSUE

There are now 1.2 million more people living in poverty in U.S. suburbs than in cities, says Valerie Weaver-Zercher, and this is causing a shift in orientation for social service agencies (page 8). "Poverty's new home raises fascinating and potentially transformative questions for suburban churches," says Weaver-Zercher. A second feature (page 12) helps us live without the answers: Kenneth Gibble says, "What God sometimes sends us in response to our questions is even more questions." J. Denny Weaver reflects on the differentiation between force and violence (page 14) and offers a new continuum that includes only options that reject the use of violence. Those following the Executive Board's proposal to restructure Mennonite Church USA will be interested in Moderator Sharon Waltner's description of the planting season (page 18).—*Editor* in 1832. This "compilation of genuine church music" has gone through at least 25 editions.

Since 1903 the Harmonia Sacra singing (prior to 1952 known as Old Folks Singing) has convened each New Year's Day at Weavers Mennonite Church near Harrisonburg. There is a schedule of other yearly singings scattered across the calendar of congregations in this area. For many of us "The Dedication Anthem" has been in our lifetime repertoire. We are happy to share this musical export from the Valley of Virginia.—*Harold D. Lehman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Loving care at journey's end

Thank you for the several essay-tributes in the April 1 issue. I was particularly moved by Leona Dueck Penner's loving tribute to her mother ("Giving Thanks at Journey's End"). With her, we could share a bit of the journey "of laughing and weeping" as she continued to love and support her mother during the "confusion, sadness and fear" of Alzheimer's disease. In the sadness, Dueck Penner offered us a gift of loving care, patience and insight.—*Paul W. Nisly, Grantham, Pa.*

Appreciates Russian Mennonite connection

I have read Ted Fransen's April 1 article "The Grandfather I Never Knew" several times now—it is a real Russian Mennonite story and of a genre that never appears in *The Mennonite.*

My own ancestors migrated from the Ukraine in 1874. In 2006, about 15 of us South Dakota Freeman-Marion Mennonites joined the Mennonite Heritage Cruise and our mindset and reasons why we were on the cruise were markedly different than the rest of the cruise members. Many of them (almost all Canadians) shared experiences like the Fransens. We, from South Dakota, could share, could hear, could sympathize to a certain extent, but we just could not completely identify. "That" was not part of our experience.

This matter or ability of "identification" is rather an interesting phenomenon. Even though we experience "it" in many different facets of everyday life, experiences such as the Fransen's are not easily identified with. This identification with the past, with family relations, with genealogy, etc., is quite another matter.

I was a "Pax boy" back in 1955-57 in Enkenbach constructing houses for refugees from West Prussia. I knew they were Mennonite but that's as much as I cared about. Until 2003, that is, when on a large Pax reunion in Enkenbach, I learned that the names of those Mennonites in Enkenbach were the same names I had grown up.

I was stunned—I could hardly believe it: Regier, Nachtigal, Wiebe, Kliewer, Ensz, Tiahrt, Classen, Franz. My God. Perhaps I had been building houses for my cousins six, seven times removed! —*Orrville Schmidt, Wakarusa, Ind.*

Was Jesus that white?

After reading the March 18 issue of *The Mennonite*, I passed it along to a black friend at church. I didn't think twice about the color of Jesus depicted on the front cover. Felix pointed to the image and said, "Was Jesus really that white?" I told him no. He asked me if the people who put together the magazine are "prejudiced." I said that I didn't think so.

Many of the early Anabaptists were iconoclasts—they destroyed sculptures and artistic images of the divine. Maybe there is still something to learn from that tradition. A healthy dose of pious iconoclasm would teach us to be more careful when it comes to creating images of Jesus—especially since we can't help but racialize him when we depict him.

Please remember that white is a color too. And, sadly, making Jesus a shade of white, however innocently, participates in the kind of dynamic that fueled the enslaving and genocidal histories of the United States and Europe.—*Isaac Villegas, Durham, N.C.*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

The struggling U.S. economy is: (52 votes):

○ Affecting me negatively (60 %)

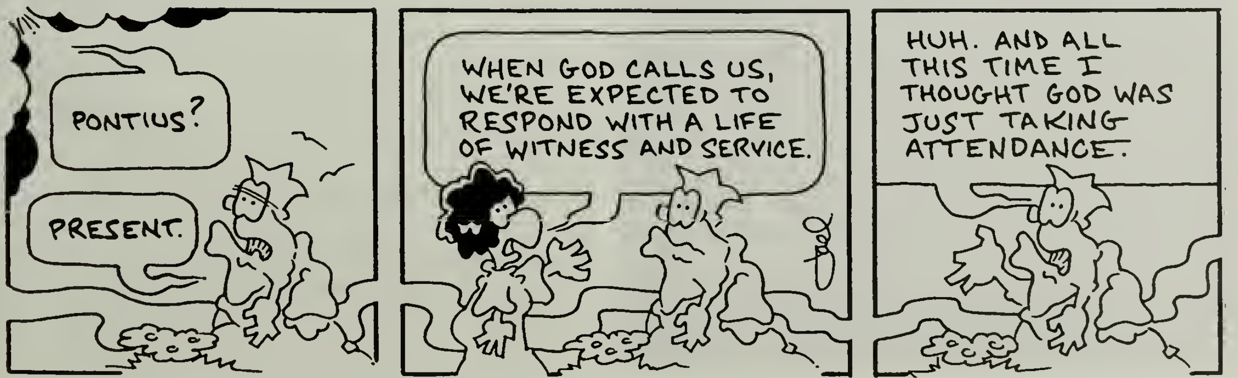
○ Not affecting me yet (35 %)

○ Not sure (5 %)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Correction: The "not sure" answer for the May 6 Online Poll Results was 21 percent.

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


PONTIUS?
PRESENT.
WHEN GOD CALLS US, WE'RE EXPECTED TO RESPOND WITH A LIFE OF WITNESS AND SERVICE.
HUH. AND ALL THIS TIME I THOUGHT GOD WAS JUST TAKING ATTENDANCE.

IN BRIEF

Stauffer MEA interim associate director

Connie Stauffer of Lancaster, Pa., began serving as interim associate director for Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) April 21. MEA is the education agency of Mennonite Church USA. Stauffer will be the MEA staff liaison with Mennonite Schools Council (MSC) and will carry these responsibilities until a permanent person has been hired. Stauffer, a retired school teacher, has served simultaneously in public school education for 30 years and in Mennonite school education for 23 years. She previously served on the MEA Board of Directors. Stauffer also has served as a board member for Lancaster Mennonite Schools.—*MEA*

Athlete earns highest ranking

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., sophomore tennis player Paige McKinney remains undefeated in singles play and holds what is likely the highest national ranking ever by a Bethel tennis player. The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) poll puts McKinney at number 15. She is 21-0 for the season.—*Bethel College*

Sri Lankan pastor released; not tortured

STRASBOURG, France—Huthin Manohar, the Sri Lankan pastor arrested and imprisoned on March 13, was released on April 28 after 48 days of detention in Colombo, the country's capital.

He has returned to his home in Mannar in the Jaffna peninsula in the north where he is pastor of Gospel Grace Church.

On May 2, Manohar reported from Mannar that he had been interrogated about his relationship with another pastor whose automobile he had hired three times in the last year to transport people to the Bauldaes Theological College board meeting and baptisms. That pastor, whose activities broke trust with the church, was arrested for transporting weapons and other equipment to the south two weeks before Manohar's arrest. Manohar said he was not tortured as he expected, but that he was confined in a cell with four other men.

Manohar came to the United States in 1990 to receive religious training; he attended West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship where he was a pastoral intern.—*Mennonite World Conference*

TIMKEN
EZGO

Larry Bartel

Hesston students build solar-powered golf cart

During the Hesston (Kan.) College spring semester students and professors explored the feasibility of a solar-energy powered golf cart. Clockwise from top: Tyler Wojcik, Zefanya Yuwono, professor Nelson Kilmer, Andrew Spotts, Cody Batchelor, professor John Yost, and Brent Garber prepare to attach the photo-voltaic solar panels to the roof of the golf cart on March 25. —*Hesston College*

First Mennonite Brethren women ordained

WINNIPEG, Man.—This spring Grace Kim and Bev Peters became the first women ever to be ordained for pastoral ministry by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren church.

Many see it as a direct outcome of a 2006 Calgary resolution on women in ministry leadership. The resolution blessed individual churches to call and affirm gifted women and men to serve in ministry and pastoral leadership, according to their own discernment of Scripture, conviction and practice. That affirmation of women now includes ordination.—*Mennonite Brethren Herald*

Church building plans included MWC donation

HARLEYSVILLE, Pa.—The Salford (Pa.) Mennonite Church completed a major remodeling and expansion of its facilities.

While the congregation still holds a mortgage from the project, members decided it was now time to follow through on their commitment.

The congregation agreed to donate a portion of the campaign goal of $3.3 million toward church buildings for congregations with fewer resources.

In January, the congregation sent $9,000 to its sister church in Mexico City, Dios Con Nosotros, and $24,000 to Mennonite World Conference for its Global Church Sharing Fund Jubilee Account, designated for churches around the globe that need assistance with worship facilities.—*Mennonite World Conference*

Paraguay 2009 theme read in eight languages

STRASBOURG, France—Mennonite World Conference officials visited Yalve Sanga, the central meeting place for the three indigenous communities in Paraguay, on April 1 to hear readings of the assembly theme in the eight languages that will be translated at assembly.

The eight translations of the theme are:
Spanish: Sigamos juntos el camino de Jesucristo
English: Come together in the way of Jesus Christ
Guaraní: Jaha oñondivepa Ñandejára Jesucristo rapére
Enlhet: Nimpasmeyquiclha ongyiplovcasojo aptemaclha Jesucristo
Nivacle: Shtavoqu'evatjuulh pa lhnôvyish pa Jesucristo
German: Miteinander unterwegs auf dem Weg Jesu Christi
French: Marchons ensemble sur le chemin de Jésus-Christ
Portuguese: Reunindo-nos para comunhão à maneira de Jesus Cristo.—*Mennonite World Conference*

Scott Jost

iginal fair trade fashions sell in Harrisonburg store
thleen Temple (left), Harrisonburg, Va., and Kaitie Atchison,
, Broadway, Va., model their original fashions as part of the
llection they donated to Artisans' Hope, a fair trade store in
rrisonburg. Many garments from the collection of 25 were
ld at an opening on April 19. The fabrics used in the collec-
n are fairly-traded hand-batik rayons from Bali. "The whole
terprise is helping to promote fair trade generally and to
int up the need for fair trade in the garment industry," said
mple, who works with Atchison at Ragtime Fabrics in down-
wn Harrisonburg.—*Anna Groff*

Robinson, longtime LMC church leader, dies

LANCASTER, Pa.—Lindsey Robinson, a missions leader, pastor, teacher and peacemaker with Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference, died on Feb. 4. Robinson first served as an LMC pastor at Hamilton Street and later Locust Lane Mennonite Churches in Harrisburg.

He also served as an associate director of Home Ministries at Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM), 1982-92, and then in various roles for LMC from 1993-2004, including Conference Minister for the last seven.

He also served on the EMM Executive Committee from 1997-2004.

Robinson last served as the general secretary of the New Testament Fellowship of Anabaptist/Mennonite Churches, a role he assumed after leaving his work with LMC in 2004.

"As an African-American leader in the context of a largely Swiss German church, he was crystal clear on the core of our faith, and he saw our spiritual blind spots better than most," said Richard Showalter, president of EMM.
—Eastern Mennonite Missions and Lancaster Mennonite Conference

MMA Web site more reader-friendly features

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) has launched a new public Web site aimed at helping people integrate their faith and their finances.

The redesigned Web site features upgraded technology, improved site navigation, and other user-friendly features.

This site launch, the first of a multi-phase redesign, delivers a customer experience focusing on the integration of faith and finance.

A new MMA Community section offers visitors a chance to get involved with e-newsletters and blogs, or to find the latest news and publications from MMA.

A new Planning & Advice section guides people through the process of thinking about things like saving for college, planning for retirement or finding advice on budget and debt issues, all in the context of their faith and values.

To come in future phases, MMA members will access secure accounts through one portal. Visit the new site at www.mma-online.org.—*MMA*

New Mennonite Women USA *Timbrel* editor

NEWTON, Kan.—Patricia Burdette, a retired English professor and former professional in public relations and financial development, replaced Laurie Oswald Robinson as Mennonite Women USA (MW USA) editor May 15. She will work from home in Pandora, Ohio.

Patricia Burdette

Burdette is no stranger to the integral role publications plays in MW USA. She served as chair of Editorial Advisory Council and was this council's representative to the MW USA board.

In that post, she helped hire Oswald Robinson, a new editor, in 2006; was part of a team that shaped the redesigned *Timbrel* in 2007; and worked with the Bible Study Advisory Council to finalize the yearly Bible study guide, commissioned by MW USA and Canadian Women in Mission.

Burdette's vocational history includes teaching rhetoric, American Indian Literature and composition, most recently at Bluffton (Ohio) University, as well as much writing and editing.

She earned a Ph.D. in American Indian Peace Studies at Union Institute in 2003.

Each year she will edit six issues of *Timbrel: Women in Conversation Together with God* and work on other writing and editing projects.
—Mennonite Church USA

—compiled by Anna Groff

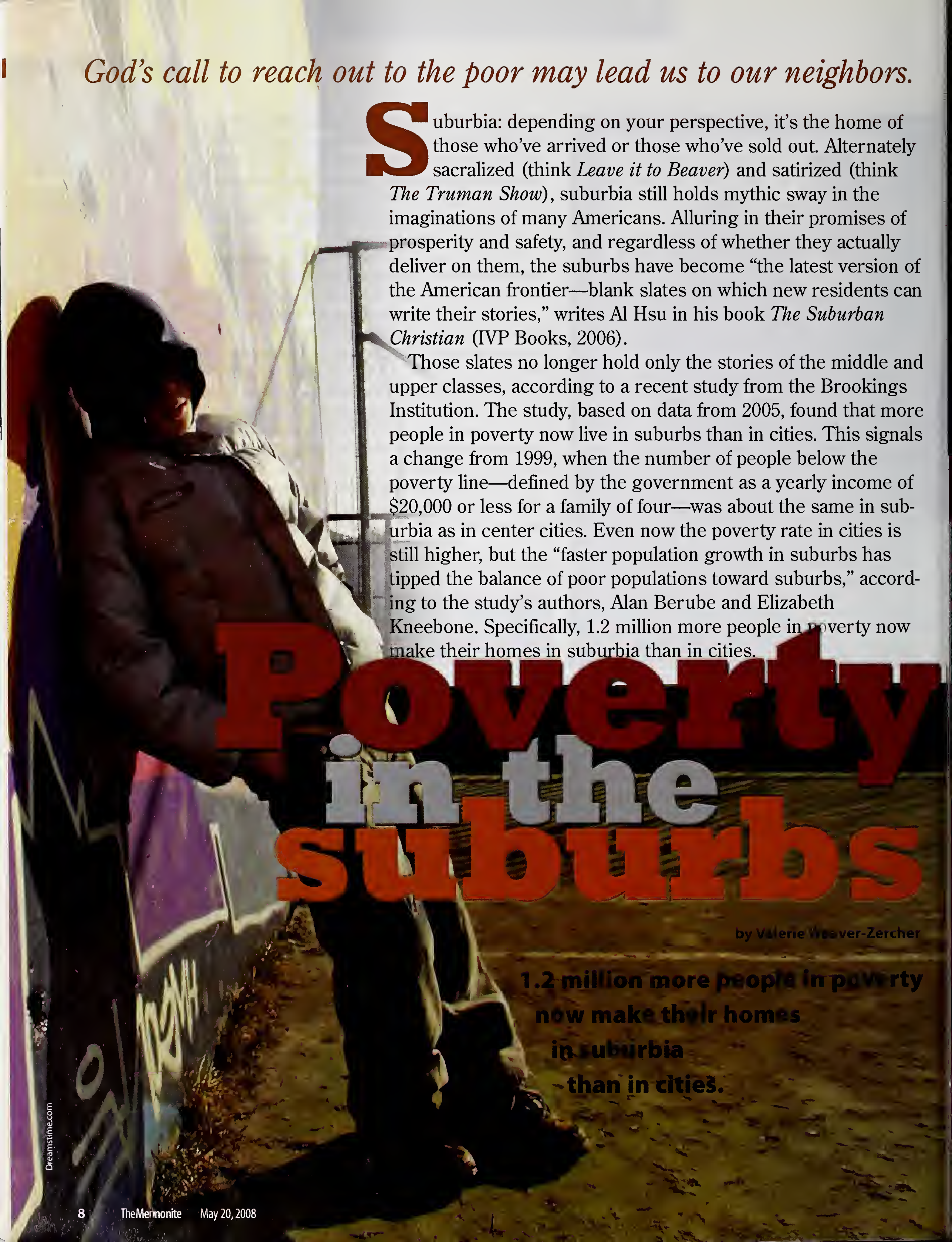
IN BRIEF

Bluffton students in USA WEEKEND

Bluffton (Ohio) University students were recognized nationally for their volunteer efforts in the April 27 issue of USA WEEKEND magazine. This issue featured the winners of the publication's 2008 Make a Difference Day Awards. On Oct. 27, 2007, 18 members of Bluffton's Habitat for Humanity chapter and 36 Bluffton baseball team members joined the Volunteer Connection of Northwest Ohio in helping 31 families in Ottawa, Ohio, with on-going flood cleanup, following severe flooding from August 2007.—*Bluffton University*

Quaker professor fired for not signing oath

A lecturer at California State University at Fullerton was fired because she refused to sign a loyalty oath to "defend" the U.S. and California Constitutions "against all enemies, foreign and domestic," the *Los Angeles Times* reported on May 2. Wendy Gonaver, a Quaker and lifelong pacifist, was set to teach American studies at the institution this academic year. She told the newspaper that she had offered to sign the oath if she could attach a short statement expressing her views, but Fullerton wouldn't allow that. Voters added the oath to the state Constitution in 1952 to keep Communists from getting public jobs. *—The Chronicle of Higher Education*



Dreamstime.com

Poverty in the suburbs

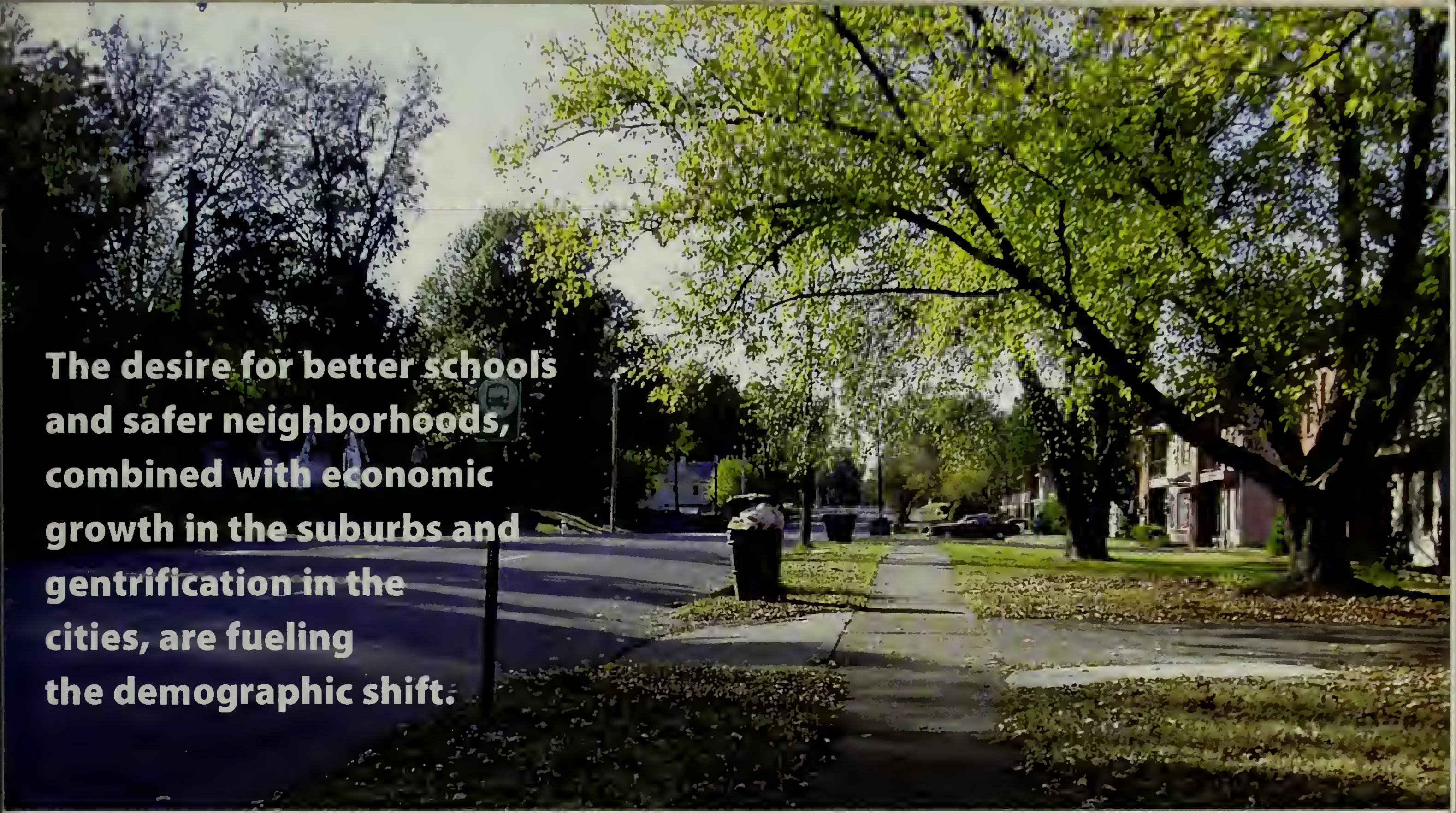
God's call to reach out to the poor may lead us to our neighbors.

by Valerie Weaver-Zercher

Suburbia: depending on your perspective, it's the home of those who've arrived or those who've sold out. Alternately sacralized (think *Leave it to Beaver*) and satirized (think *The Truman Show*), suburbia still holds mythic sway in the imaginations of many Americans. Alluring in their promises of prosperity and safety, and regardless of whether they actually deliver on them, the suburbs have become "the latest version of the American frontier—blank slates on which new residents can write their stories," writes Al Hsu in his book *The Suburban Christian* (IVP Books, 2006).

Those slates no longer hold only the stories of the middle and upper classes, according to a recent study from the Brookings Institution. The study, based on data from 2005, found that more people in poverty now live in suburbs than in cities. This signals a change from 1999, when the number of people below the poverty line—defined by the government as a yearly income of $20,000 or less for a family of four—was about the same in suburbia as in center cities. Even now the poverty rate in cities is still higher, but the "faster population growth in suburbs has tipped the balance of poor populations toward suburbs," according to the study's authors, Alan Berube and Elizabeth Kneebone. Specifically, 1.2 million more people in poverty now make their homes in suburbia than in cities.

1.2 million more people in poverty now make their homes in suburbia than in cities.



The desire for better schools and safer neighborhoods, combined with economic growth in the suburbs and gentrification in the cities, are fueling the demographic shift.

The changing economic landscape of metropolitan areas has not been lost on Christian nonprofits that work with the poor. During the past decade, Habitat for Humanity International affiliates in urban areas have increased production of houses in areas outside of the city core, according to Stephen Seidel, urban programs director for Habitat. Similarly, suburban affiliates of Bridge of Hope National, an ecumenical nonprofit that connects homeless women and their children to church-based mentoring groups, have seen an increase in the number of applications from women living in cities wanting to move out to the suburbs.

"Everybody is waking up to that fact [of the increasing numbers of poor people in the suburbs]," says Noel Castellanos, associate executive director of Christian Community Development Association in Chicago. For the first time, the 2007 CCDA conference featured a track of workshops devoted to working with the suburban poor.

The recent shift deserves attention from not only Christian nonprofits but also Christian individuals in the suburbs, many of whom may still think of poverty as residing in other zip codes. "A lot of us move to the suburbs because we want to get away from people in need," Will Samson, coauthor of the book *Justice in the 'Burbs* (Baker, 2007), said in an interview. "Suburbs are designed to keep people in need out, because they don't fit with the American suburban story. Suburbs are designed for you to drive into your driveway, shut your garage door and shut out the world."

But say you have no driveway. No garage door. Say you have lived in a high-rise project all your life, a building that is now slated for demolition. You read in the newspaper that your neighborhood is experiencing "urban renewal," that you should be happy that professionals are bringing their resources and clout back to the city. You are told not to worry, that your home will be replaced by at least some "affordable" housing (which you and most of your neighbors can't actually afford). Say your job moved to a suburban industrial park a couple years ago and that you have been commuting an hour on the bus each way. Say you've heard suburban schools are better anyway and that if you and your kids are willing to live with another family and eat mostly soda crackers and ketchup, you just might be able to afford rent for a house in the suburb right outside the city limits.

"The poor are not isolated from the American Dream," says Edith Yoder, a member of Frazer (Pa.) Mennonite Church and executive director of Bridge of Hope National. The desire for better schools and safer neighborhoods, combined with the twin forces of economic growth in the suburbs and gentrification in the cities, are fueling the demographic shift detailed by the Brookings study. Indeed, while the recent study's findings can be attributed, in part, to some longtime suburban residents losing financial footing, much of the shift is due to the relocation to the suburbs by low-income people.

The outward migration of low-income people from cities follows the trajectory of job growth. Industrial and service jobs have been moving outward to suburban rings for at least 30 years, so it

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

makes sense that the people who hold those jobs would follow. Yoder, who lives in Philadelphia and commutes to suburban Chester County, says people often assume her commute doesn't take long because it goes "against" rush-hour traffic. "That's not true anymore," she says, noting the increasing numbers of commuter vans that ferry low-wage workers from the city to their jobs in the hotels and industrial parks of surrounding suburbs.

Adjunct to the suburbanization of job prospects is the gentrification of cities. In the last 10 years, more and more cities have begun working from the theory that "concentrations of poverty are detrimental to community vibrancy and health," according to Seidel of Habitat for Humanity. Cities are employing what Seidel calls "deliberate strategies to deconcentrate poverty and disperse it more among the metropolitan base": aka "urban renewal." The same phenomenon that is pushing low-income people out of center cities is pushing out the nonprofits who work with them. "The real-estate development scene in urban areas has simply become too complex and too costly," says Seidel. Formerly the director of the Twin Cities Habitat affiliate, Seidel recalls a time when their organization could purchase a vacant lot in Minneapolis or St. Paul for a $100. Those same empty lots now often sell for $50,000.

People in suburban churches and communities are often unaware of the poverty around them.

The mythic appeal of the suburbs should not be underestimated either. "We're hearing Bridge of Hope applicants saying, 'I want better schools for my kids. I want a safe neighborhood,'" says Yoder. "I've heard women conjure up the image of the white picket fence."

When low-income people make a move to the suburbs, they often move to older, first-ring suburbs right outside the city, many of which now feel more "urban"—in terms of crime, population density and housing stock decay—than "suburban." What many people making the move do not realize, according to Yoder, is that "the area they're moving to is actually just a smaller urban area with similar problems to where they live now."

Shadell Quinones knows what it's like to be poor in the suburbs. Several years ago, she moved from Brooklyn to a suburban county outside Philadelphia for a residential social work position. After losing the job, Quinones and her daughter became homeless and stayed at a shelter for several months. Quinones says the toughest part of being poor in the suburbs was the lack of transportation. "Having moved from a city, where you could get anywhere at any time of day or night, the lack of public transportation was a major culture shock," she says. "I was like, 'What do you mean, the bus stops at noon because they take lunch?'"

Although Quinones was a social worker and trained in connecting people with services such as food banks and job-training programs, she had difficulty accessing those services herself during the months she was homeless—mostly because she couldn't get to them. Quinones says she often ended up doing her grocery shopping at the relatively expensive drugstore across the street from the homeless shelter because she couldn't get to the nearest supermarket located in the next town.

Even if the suburban poor do have access to transportation, they may find that such social services don't exist in their communities. "I have a huge concern that suburban communities are not equipped to respond [to increased poverty] with social services," says Noel Castellanos of CCDA. "It's a crisis for many suburban communities to have to deal with things they haven't had to."

Quinones eventually found assistance through Bridge of Hope. Even as Quinones was receiving support and friendship from her mentoring group, her mostly middle-class mentors were getting a glimpse of the realities of poverty in the 'burbs. "What I heard from my mentors was that by participating in Bridge of Hope, they were enlightened and educated about the poverty that surrounds them," says Quinones. While urban poverty and homelessness are visible, Quinones says, she's found that people in suburban churches and communities are often unaware of the poverty around them. "In the suburbs, poverty is not in your face. You're not going to walk down the road and trip over someone sleeping under cardboard."

The hidden nature of poverty in the suburbs is not likely to change, says Al Hsu, despite the study's findings. Officials in suburban municipalities will most likely continue denying that poverty exists in their areas, he says, "because it's bad for business and bad for investment."

Yoder concurs. "We see what we choose to see," she says, adding that the suburban poor are still mostly pocketed away in trailer parks or subdivisions away from wealthier residents of the same suburbs. In presentations about Bridge of Hope at suburban churches across the country, she says, “we still hear the same question we were hearing 20 years ago: ‘We don’t have homeless people here, do we?’”

Poverty’s new home raises fascinating and potentially transformative questions for suburban churches. “Some suburban churches that have been reluctant to deal with the poor are saying, ‘Now the poor are coming to us,’” says Castellanos. Even suburban churches that have been willing to send service and ministry groups to nearby cities may be ill-equipped to deal with poor people in their neighborhoods. “If you’re dealing with poverty in the city, it’s at a pretty safe distance,” Castellanos says. “There’s not a big chance that a lot of these folks [ministered to in the city] will show up at your suburban church on Sunday morning. Now, however, what will happen if a lot of people from a different class start coming to your middle-class church? Will you be able to welcome them into your midst?”

An authentic welcome of people in poverty may require nothing less than a total reordering of theological priorities.

Will and Lisa Samson, authors of *Justice in the ’Burbs*, suggest that truly welcoming people in need won’t mean simply setting up a clothing closet or passing out tracts at the trailer park. Rather, the Samsons posit that an authentic welcome of people in poverty may require nothing less than a total reordering of theological priorities. Having lived in suburbia all their lives, the Samsons say that several years ago they experienced an epiphany about the nature of God. They describe it as an awakening to the realities of injustice that both changed their lives and bewildered their friends. “We began to ask ourselves, How have we been reading the Bible all our lives and never seen that God’s heart is with the poor?” says Will.

Their book follows the experiences of a fictional suburban couple who, like them, begin to ask questions about the barriers to discipleship they encounter in the suburbs. Each chapter includes a narrative piece about the fictional family, a teaching section on the issues that the narrative raises, then concludes with a theological meditation by Christian leaders such as Brian McLaren and Luci Shaw.

The Samsons have since joined an intentional Christian community in an urban neighborhood. They say that not all suburban Christians will be called to relocate to a city but all Christians should “figure out how to engage with issues of justice wherever they are.” Lisa, a novelist, puts it this way: “When you open your eyes to issues of justice, everything in your life changes.”

The Brookings Institution study suggests that Christians in the suburbs, if they keep their eyes open, will update old notions of who-lives-where. They may even find that the “least of these” live closer than they thought. “Once mentors from churches have their eyes opened to the reality of poverty in the suburbs, they can see it everywhere,” says Yoder of Bridge of Hope. “They start thinking, Oh, the clerk at the grocery store might be like my friend Ellen.”

“What we are trying to tell people,” adds Castellanos of CCDA, “is that if God is calling you to work with the poor, you can’t assume anymore that that means you will be in the city.”

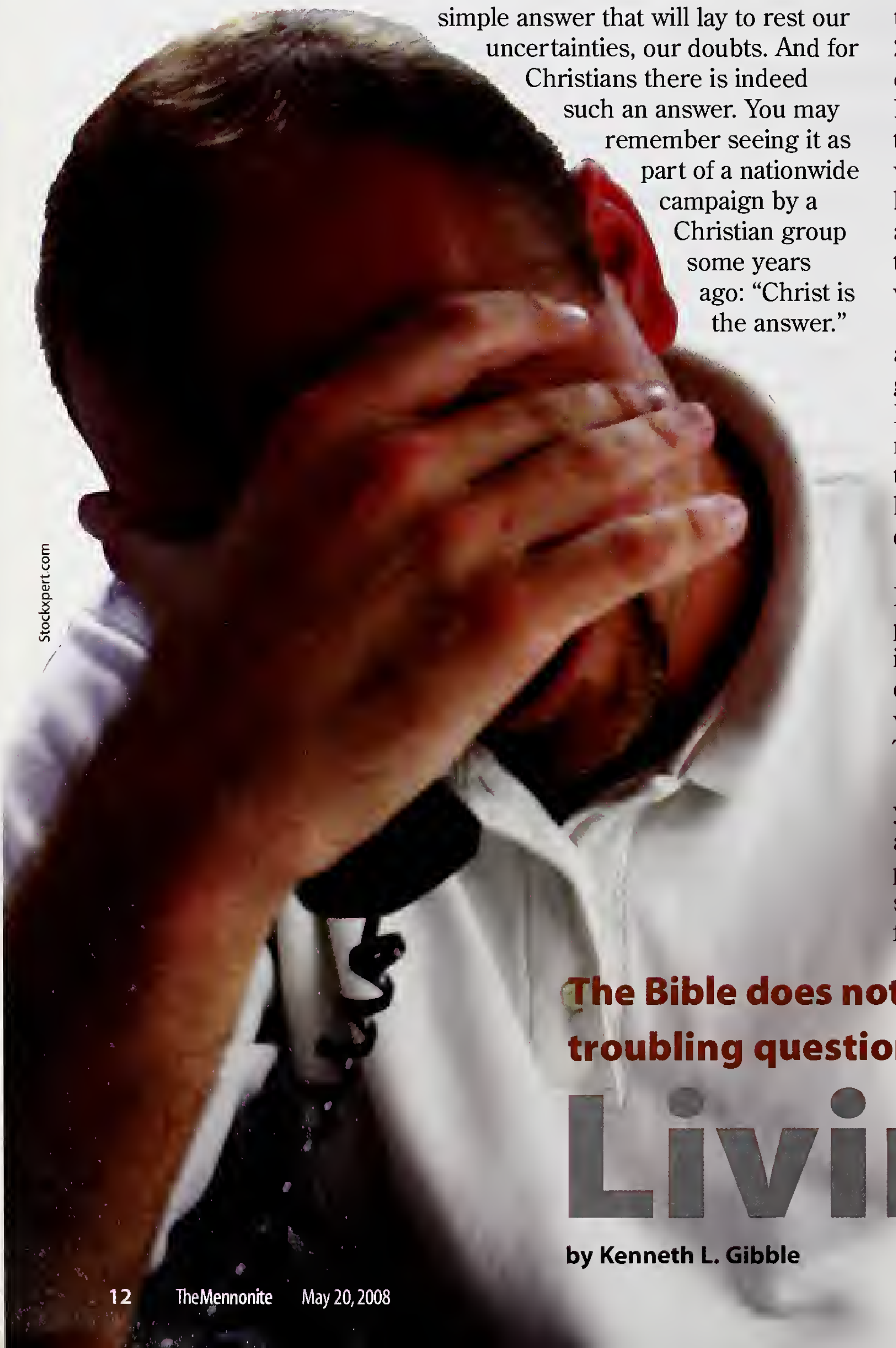
Valerie Weaver-Zercher is a writer and editor in Mechanicsburg, Pa. She attends First Church of the Brethren and an Anabaptist house fellowship and serves as poetry consultant for The Mennonite.

Stockxpert.com

God's answers to our questions may lead us to a deeper faith.

Living with

by Kenneth L. Gibble



Stockxpert.com

Years ago I saw a poster with the following words: "For every difficult social problem, there is a simple answer … and it's wrong!" I decided it was true: There are no simple, one-size-fits-all answers to difficult social problems.

Take world hunger or drug addiction or racism. How wonderful if these ills that plague humanity could be solved by writing a book or passing a law or creating a government program. But as good and necessary as books and laws and programs may be, solving the problem is not that simple.

The same is true when it comes to questions about faith, such as, Why is there pain? Where does evil come from? What is God's will for my life? We long for an answer that makes sense, a simple answer that will lay to rest our uncertainties, our doubts. And for Christians there is indeed such an answer. You may remember seeing it as part of a nationwide campaign by a Christian group some years ago: "Christ is the answer."

But whenever I saw those words, I found myself getting angry. I believe Christ is the answer, but I also believe it is dangerous, unloving, even unChrist-like, to toss those four words around—like so much verbal confetti.

When somebody is dealing with a deep-seated problem or a personal crisis or asking questions that are a cry of the soul, about the worst thing you can do is to say, "Oh, don't worry, just have faith, just believe that Christ is the answer." I have known people who have done that with the best of intentions and in so doing have inflicted terrible damage on the one they wanted to help.

The Bible does not offer simplistic answers to the troubling questions we face. The Psalms contain great testimonies of faith. The poetry of Psalm 23 is beautiful, for example. But the Psalms also contain testimonies of doubt and anguish: "How long, O Lord, how long?" That question is repeated three times in Psalm 13. You can tell from those words that the suffering has been going on for a long time. And though the Psalm ends with an affirmation of faith, it is a faith that has been sorely tested, has come through the fire, has had to learn what it means to live without the answers.

The apostle Paul had that kind of faith. His accomplishments for the cause of Christ are staggering: a founder of churches all across the Roman Empire, a writer of magnificent letters that, nearly 2,000 years after he wrote them, still have the power to comfort and convict. Yet Paul had to learn an important lesson from the Lord. It had to do with what Paul called "a thorn in the flesh."

There have been many guesses about what Paul's thorn in the flesh might have been—epilepsy, poor eyesight, sexual temptation. Three times he implored the Lord to take it from him, and the Lord did not give him the answer he wanted. For a time, we don't know how long, there was no answer. Then finally the Lord did answer Paul's prayer.

Your own search: Try to remember a time in your life when you asked God for an answer. You asked God to make someone well, perhaps a grandparent or a parent. Or you prayed for something similar as a grownup. You prayed for it constantly, fervently. You promised God you'd do anything, if

The Bible does not offer simplistic answers to the troubling questions we face.

only God would say yes to your request. Then you waited for the answer. You waited and waited. But an answer didn't come. God was silent, or if God was speaking, you couldn't hear the answer.

What happened then? Did you keep asking, did you decide to ask in a different way or did you stop asking altogether? What did it mean for you to live without an answer?

One of my friends, a director of pastoral care at a health-care center, says many people have simple answers to life's difficulties until the questions appear in bold fashion in their own lives. He says: "You may think you know about divorce, the death of a child, suicide, homosexuality, abortion, depression, unemployment or a runaway child until it happens to you or your loved ones. When it does, you realize how little you knew, how little you know. Life may be simple in the armchair, on the sofa or in the grandstand. On the playing field, it is complex and downright difficult."

Anyone who has wrestled with God in the darkness—beseeching God for something—knows that satisfactory answers are sometimes hard to come by.

In fact, what God sometimes sends us in response to our questions is even more questions. That's often what Jesus did when he was confronted with a question. Once a rich young man came to Jesus with a heartfelt question: "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus responded first with a question of his own: "What is written in the law? What do you read there?"

Jesus is the great question asker:

"Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" (Matthew 6:25).

"Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath?" (Mark 3:4).

"Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3).

"Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" (Luke 10:36).

How God answers: Again and again, Jesus listened to those who came to him for answers, then turned them around to look at their own lives and at the world around them. Not because he didn't have the answers but because he wanted them to look deeper, to engage more fully in their own life and the lives of others. He wanted them to encounter God in the depth of their questions.

Perhaps this is why the answers you and I often desire from God are not forthcoming. We cannot know the mind of God, but when we look at the way Jesus often spoke about God, how he related to the people who came to him, telling them stories that surely left them scratching their heads, answering their questions with questions of his own, we catch glimpses of how God deals with many of the questions in our own hearts.

You and I want answers, and sometimes we do not get them. Sometimes we receive answers, but not the ones we hoped for. It was that kind of answer Paul got when the Lord finally responded to his request to take away the thorn in his flesh. Paul tells us the answer the Lord gave was: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

That wasn't the answer Paul wanted, but it changed him, transformed his understanding about how God was at work in his life. And Paul could at last say, "I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Paul discovered what we may discover by the grace of God—that indeed "Christ is the answer." But if you get to the point where you can say that, you will have walked through the fire. It will not do to say, "Christ is the answer" to someone else with even a hint of arrogance. If you say it at all, it will likely be spoken to yourself, in a whisper, and there may be tears streaming down your face when you say it. And as you say it, you will be learning the truth that Paul learned, that the grace of the Lord is sufficient for you, that the power of the Lord is made perfect in weakness. Your weakness, my weakness, the weakness of all those who often find themselves living without the answers they crave.

EMERGENCY
PHONE
AND
CRISIS
COUNSELING

Stockxpert.com

What God sometimes sends us in response to our questions is even more questions.

What is given to us, finally, is better than the answers we ask for. We are given the presence, the blessing of the One who is himself the Holy Answer to every question.

Kenneth L. Gibble lives in Greencastle, Pa.

out the answers

Reflections on coercion, force and violence

Visualizing nonviolence

by J. Denny Weaver

Did Jesus practice violence? The fact that some people think he did illustrates our difficulties in defining and visualizing violence. It may be a case like the Supreme Court Justice who famously said about pornography: It is difficult to define but "I know it when I see it." Unfortunately, we do not all see the same thing.

One problem is that we do not have a set of words we all understand in the same way to discuss violence. For example, in a Feb. 20, 2007, editorial, Everett Thomas distinguished between violence and force. He suggested that "force" could be used for positive applications of strength and energy, as when a parent resists a willful child or insists it is bedtime, whereas "violence" referred to use of force with intent to "injure or abuse." I agree with the distinction. But what if I call the positive acts coercion or compulsion instead of force? Is coercion or compulsion different from force or violence?

A second problem concerns the image in our minds of how these kinds of coercion or force or violence relate to each other. In the church of my boyhood, violence was understood as any act that opposed another person's will. By that definition, the examples of positive force Thomas suggested would be instances of violence, and so would some actions of Jesus—an idea that never occurred to us. However, I have changed my mind and now agree with making the kind of distinction that Thomas suggested.

But does now seeing force or coercion as acceptable indicate a loosening of our peace church commitment? Does Thomas' distinction between force and violence start us down a slippery slope toward the acceptance of violence? I think not.

Some defenders of redemptive violence argue that since we are already using violence, we should participate in military violence.

Consider these activities:

- Passive nonresistance that does not assert itself against another.
- Giving an aggressive child a five-minute "time out."
- Banning the aggressive child from going on play dates with friends for a week.
- Writing a polite letter to the White House to witness against the war in Iraq.
- Using sarcasm in a letter-to-the-editor to depict the hypocrisy of a public figure.
- Engaging in a public protest against the war in Iraq.
- Intervening in a local land-use dispute to urge returning an army ammunition plan to original prairie. (See story on page 16.)
- Working in the criminal justice system as a practitioner of restorative justice.
- African-Americans sitting down and asking to order lunch at a segregated lunch counter.
- Opposing the war in Iraq by occupying a U.S. federal courthouse to protest the indefinite detainment without charges of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and accepting arrest rather than leaving as ordered by police (see Feb. 20, 2007, issue).
- Entering a nuclear weapons plant illegally and pounding on a warhead with hammers to act out turning swords into plowshares.
- Working in the criminal justice system as a police officer with the intent of using a gun as little as possible.

WAGE PEACE
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO RULE THE WORLD
PEACE TAKES COUR
TRUE TERRORISM STARTS WITH THE I.R.S.!
OUR SOLDIERS ARE
BRING OUR SOLDIERS HOME!

- Joining the National Guard to contribute to national security.
- Joining the military in a noncombatant role, such as medic or chaplain.
- Joining the military to avenge Sept. 11 and to fight terrorism.
- Joining an elite military unit that specializes in political assassinations and other covert activity outside conventional military tactics.

I've tried to order these from least force to most force or violence. It's a succession in which each point is much like its neighbor, but the extremes are clearly different. Arranging things in sequence stems naturally from our desire for order.

But in this case, the principle of arranging things in order can mislead. This natural order has the potential to shape the way we see violence and the distinction Thomas pointed to between force or coercion and violence.

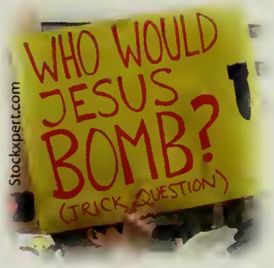
Behind this natural ordering is an assumption—usually unstated—that all the options belong in this ordered lineup. This continuum is measuring least to most violence. Stated another way, all the options are within the same frame of reference since they are on the same continuum. Whether or not it is intended, arranging all the options on one continuum leads us to believe that all the options exert some level of violence. It is a spectrum of violent options. A teacher's or a parent's coercion against the will of the child belongs to the same frame of reference as lethal violence by the military. Some defenders of redemptive violence make this application. They argue that since we are already using violence, we should participate in military violence.

Putting all the options on one, violence-measuring continuum makes some actions of Jesus appear violent. The sarcastic letter resembles Jesus' provocative sarcastic language (Luke 11:40, 44, 52). Healing the withered hand on the Sabbath when he could have waited until the next day (Luke 6:6-11) and traveling through Samaria and accepting a drink from a Samaritan woman were actions proscribed by the purity code. They might parallel a lunch counter sit-in. He staged a vigorous protest in the temple (Luke 19:45-46), which actually provoked his arrest and execution. This protest corresponds to the courthouse occupation or even pounding on a bomb.

Along with defining all activities on the continuum as violent, organizing all actions on one continuum has another serious problem. There is no logical stopping point on the continuum where it passes the point of too much violence. This continuum is in fact a slippery slope. The nonviolent resistance tactics in the middle appear as compromises between absolute nonresistance and effective violence. For each step along the continuum, it offers yet one more compromise step to accomplish even more with just a bit more violence.

From the perspective of a person who accepts the use of lethal force to provide security and promote justice, this continuum constitutes conventional wisdom—claim to use the least violence necessary while retaining violence as the ultimate basis of order. But for the person who professes nonviolence, the continuum invites compromise with violence in the name of the higher good of preserving order or pursuing justice. The question becomes how far the nonviolent Christian can advance along the continuum before surrendering a commitment to nonviolence.

The question is not whether all the options exist, and obviously one can choose to arrange all the options along one continuum. The important questions are how to arrange them in orderly fashion and how to understand the relationship of the options to each other. Is there an organization in which not all options appear violent and that is not a slippery slope toward violence?



Stockxpert.com

We can see another continuum if we look at the options with lenses focused by the nonviolent reign of God. This second continuum emerges from our commitment to witness and live now on the basis of the future reign of God made visible in Jesus. Like the first continuum, the second one has passive nonresistance at one end. But a primary characteristic is that this second continuum contains only options that reject the use of violence. On this continuum, organized by increasing levels of intensity of confrontation, are levels of acceptable compulsion or coercion or force, both mental and physical, as defined by Thomas. In every case, the positions on this continuum reject the idea of inflicting injury, and people are willing to suffer harm rather than abuse or injure others. All but the last five positions above reside on this continuum of nonviolence. The more assertive actions of Jesus reside on this continuum alongside his nonresistant response to crucifixion, and cannot be labeled violent actions as some advocates of redemptive violence argue.

We can see another continuum if we look at the options with lenses focused by the nonviolent reign of God.

The important point is to see that on this second continuum, nonviolent coercion is not on a slippery slope. Visualizing this continuum enables us to discuss and engage in nonviolent action without considering it a compromise with violent coercion.

Visualizing this second continuum will not solve all our questions about how to define and oppose violence. However, I pray this proposal clarifies our discussions of coercion, force and violence and thus help us as a peace church better understand how to oppose violence.

J. Denny Weaver is professor emeritus of religion and the Harry and Jean Yoder Scholar in Bible and Religion of Bluffton (Ohio) University. He is a member of Madison (Wis.) Mennonite Church.

A story of healing

by David Serafy-Cox

Do the terms "Mennonite peace church" and "army ammunition plant" belong in the same sentence? The congregation was Madison (Wis.) Mennonite Church. The facility was the Badger Army Ammunition Plant, which provided powder and propellant for the rifles, machine guns, artillery and helicopter rockets of three international wars but was now considered surplus property by the government.

The question was whether our desire to maintain an authentic witness to God's reign would call us to watch proceedings from a distance or to engage actively in decisions about future uses for this land. Getting involved felt like a risky endeavor. This article recounts our congregation's seven-year-long engagement.

The large tract of plant land lies 30 miles northwest of Madison, just inside Sauk County, and includes much of the former Sauk Prairie stretching south from the base of the Baraboo Hills. Along with significant clusters of abandoned buildings, extensive sections of plant land remain open, including remnants of the original oak savannas.

Before European settlement, the Ho-Chunk Nation of Native Americans utilized the Sauk Prairie, as did the Sauk and Fox Nations. Europeans displaced the native people and transformed the ecologically diverse prairie into cropland and dairy farms. From the mid-1800s, the group of farm families near the base of the Baraboo Hills formed a coherent community with their own schools, churches, cemeteries and successful farms.

This farm community ended during World War II, when the federal government used eminent domain to evict some 80 farm families from their land. Rapid construction followed of Badger Ordinance Works, as it was first called. The forced eviction of so many farm families was a traumatic experience in Sauk County, still echoing today. The mother and grandparents of a member of Madison Mennonite Church were one of those displaced farm families.

Such a radical healing, a modern-day 'swords into plowshares,' seemed to fit our peace church identity well.

Over the course of World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, the plant produced 1.1 billion pounds of smokeless powder and cluttered the Sauk Prairie with 1,400 buildings. The amount of destruction manufactured here staggers the imagination.

Following the Vietnam War, the plant was downgraded to stand-by status. In 1997, the Army declared it "surplus property" and initiated a process to dispose of the land.

What should happen to 7,354 acres burdened with this sad history?

The initial, top-down plan of the federal government to sell the land for private and industrial development was halted by strong local opposition.

In contrast, the newly formed group, Community Conservation Coalition for the Sauk Prairie (CCCSP), developed a comprehensive vision for the plant lands, containing these elements:

- Limit future land use to ecological restoration and conservation purposes, specifically excluding industrial development and private ownership;
- Decisions about the plant's future should be made through a process of direct public involvement;
- The future owners should cooperatively manage the land as a single ecosystem, using conservation and public access criteria.

The CCCSP then set out to solicit endorsements for their audacious plan.

This was the history that Madison Mennonite Church contemplated joining. To gain information, members attended several events organized by the CCCSP. Particularly attractive in what we learned was the symbolism of moving a piece of land from

Wikipedia.com

From army ammu

gunpowder production all the way back to native prairie. Such a radical healing, a modern-day "swords into plowshares," seemed to fit our peace church identity well.

How specifically could we help with this issue? Initial actions included staffing information tables at the farmer's market in Madison, writing advocacy letters and attending numerous governmental meetings. Most satisfying, members of the congregation actually entered the land tract to help gather and replant native prairie seeds. Most spectacular was helping with prairie burns.

Though in hindsight these actions appear mundane, our involvement seemed risky at the time. Most daunting was the decision, made at a lively congregational meeting, to publicly endorse the CCCSP proposal described above. Probably still lodged in the back of our minds were remnants of the centuries-long tradition of Mennonites' "separation from the world," of uninvolvement in governmental matters and avoidance of anything connected with the military. Making a visible, public declaration was new and seemingly risky territory for us.

And then we went beyond endorsement. As our meeting neared its close, Jerry Shenk made the memorable suggestion that we not simply send the signed, "cookie-cutter" endorsement form back to the CCCSP but strengthen our public witness by adding a letter of theological explanation for our action.

The congregation responded enthusiastically. With the help of a subcommittee, our letter was carefully crafted and enclosed with the endorsement form.

The letter explained why a Mennonite church should get mixed up with an ammunition plant: the vision of a healed and reconciled world of peace involving all of creation. Helping heal the Sauk Prairie from injustice and gross misuse witnesses to the peaceable reign of God breaking into the world in Jesus. As our letter said, "The gospel of Jesus says that the possibility of healing and reconciliation is always available to us. ... If people can work cooperatively in allowing this land once again to bloom as it did in former times, ... an example of the restoration of harmony among people and between people and the land could be passed down to future generations."

As encouragement for all peace efforts, particularly those contemplating the risk of engagement for the first time, I should describe how our letter's subsequent life was beyond anything we had imagined. People in Sauk County made copies and passed it from hand to hand. Sauk County newspapers reprinted it. Perhaps most surprising, content from our letter had an impact on the official Badger Reuse Plan, the document that will guide the three new owners of the Badger lands in their management of the site (the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Ho-Chunk Nation and the Dairy Forage Research Center). Our letter's phraseology and ideas are reflected in Value #4 of the document. It states:

"Uses and activity at the Badger property shall contribute to the reconciliation and resolution of past conflicts involving the loss and contamination of the natural environment, the displacement of Native Americans and Euro-American farmers and the effects of war."

Comments from our letter are also reflected in a subsection of Value #4, concerning a proposed historical museum and memorials, where "[war] protesters, Badger Village residents, members of the Ho-Chunk Nation and displaced farmers" should be recognized "without glorifying the war experience."

The gospel of Jesus says that the possibility of healing and reconciliation is always available to us.

Our seven-year involvement with the transformation of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant is but one piece of a healing process that will take decades. Although our church's efforts are only a tiny addition to the efforts of many others, it is important to know that such efforts can make a difference.

At the beginning, engagement seemed risky. But that risk bore fruit, and now not being involved seems incomprehensible. Our prayer is that God may bless all efforts to restore harmony among people, to heal the land and restore harmony between people and the land.

David Serafy-Cox is a computer art teacher living in Madison, Wis. The first version of this essay was a sermon at Madison Mennonite Church, where he is a longtime member.

Stockxpert.com

ition plant to prairie

The season for planting is upon us

Sharon Waltner is moderator of Mennonite Church USA

It's planting season in South Dakota, and this time of year reminds me of my dad's story about the evolution of farm machinery. Dad grew up when fields were tilled and planted with horse-powered implements. When his father changed to their first tractor, it was difficult.

Dad recalls the excitement of watching the first time the plow effortlessly raced across the field—seemingly propelled by the Divine. That excitement turned to horror, however, when the tractor got to the end of the field. Grandpa hollered, "Whoa! Whoa!" trying to convince the tractor to follow instructions like the horses did. Instead of slowing and turning to make another pass, the disobedient tractor plowed through the fence into the neighbor's field!

In retrospect, it's a comedic story, though I'm sure it certainly didn't seem very funny at the time. Implementing change is difficult. Grandpa's exasperation at the tractor's unwillingness to follow verbal instructions eventually turned to an appreciation for the machine's capabilities.

Change is not easy, and it's rarely comfortable. During this season, I see many parallels between my farm work and my work with Mennonite Church USA.

In February, the Executive Board expressed a desire to reframe present church systems in order to increase our ability to be more faithful and effective as a church. We believe we have a message the world is longing to hear and that we can do better by learning from our past.

So far I've heard, "I thought we did this six years ago," and "When will we ever be finished restructuring?" Some have expressed significant concern about this direction, while others are excited about what this means for our future.

I believe the first six years of Mennonite Church USA, combined with our 500-year history as Anabaptists, have served the role of preparing the soil for our future. The preparation has left us seeking a God-inspired vision that guides, transforms and enables us to fulfill the mission God has entrusted to us.

Our vision is healing and hope. Establishing communities of faith, hope and love are fruits of the Spirit. We are doing many things well, and God is nourishing many efforts throughout our church. We don't want to lose that.

But as farmers optimistically planning for a bountiful harvest for Mennonite Church USA, we know our window for planting is only open so long. We don't want to miss the prime growing season in a time when the sustenance of God's healing and hope is needed. We cannot be so consumed by our problems that we fail to be the people God is calling us to become.

I hear from constituents that our denomination has too much infrastructure for our size. We have duplication among our churchwide agencies. Our churchwide system does not encourage optimum collaboration among agencies and conferences, nor does it adequately equip congregations for ministry in their communities.

The board seeks to plant and nurture crops of collaboration, relevance, simplicity, responsiveness and empowerment in our church structures, relationships and behaviors.

The recent Mennonite Member Profile tells us we are getting older, losing young people and less willing to share our faith. We're also increasingly taking cues from our culture rather than our church.

While our Racial/Ethnic congregations are growing, we haven't provided adequate resources to these congregations nor embraced their gifts.

We can't let these things instill so great a sense of fear or defeat that we neglect to act. We can't neglect to plant for fear of failure. The process of soil preparation and seed selection exhibits our trust in God's Spirit.

The Executive Board invites you to join this planting season for the church's future. We have set a direction and know what needs to be sown. But the ways and places we will plant have yet to be determined. We need you to join this work.

Currently, board members are meeting with people from across the church to listen to concerns and gain wisdom as we discern the best way to improve our relationships and structures.

The insights shared in these meetings will guide us as we prepare for a gathering of all Mennonite Church USA boards of directors June 20-21 in Columbus, Ohio. God has been preparing the ground for the crops we will sow for the future. Many opportunities are coming our way as we join God's work. We have much to celebrate for we are in the season of planting—full of hope and anticipation for the harvest.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Join the new Anabaptist conspirators**—Tom Sine
- **God empowers—we serve**—Philip T. Clemens

MCC launches Myanmar cyclone appeal

Mennonite Central Committee committing $100,000 to relief and recovery.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is appealing for financial contributions to support relief and recovery efforts in Myanmar, also known as Burma, following a catastrophic cyclone in the southeast Asian nation.

Cyclone Nargis made landfall on May 2 and devastated southern Myanmar's delta region. According to news reports, the cyclone drove a wall of water over coastal communities before many residents could escape. The U.S. government estimates that the death toll could reach 100,000.

MCC is committing an initial $100,000 to cyclone relief and recovery efforts. While MCC does not currently have workers or programs in Myanmar, MCC will support the work of partner organizations that are already active in the country. One such partner is Church World Service (CWS).

MCC is providing $20,000 to CWS to distribute water purification tablets, water containers and other supplies to provide clean drinking water to people affected by the cyclone. According to news reports, the cyclone flooded wells and other water sources, putting survivors at risk of contracting waterborne diseases.

Tom Wenger, MCC's associate director for Asia, said CWS already has staff members and supplies in the country.

MCC's support will help CWS provide drinking water to about 3,000 to 4,000 people who have been affected by the cyclone.

News reports have also highlighted the difficulty that some aid organizations are facing in obtaining governmental permission to enter Myanmar and provide supplies.

According to Wenger, Myanmar is a predominantly agricultural nation that is less connected to the West, politically and economically, than many other parts of Asia. Buddhism is the predominant religion, but there are active Christian and Muslim minorities.

Wenger said the cyclone may provide the opportunity for MCC to be more involved in Myanmar in the future.

"This may be the moment when Burma will open up," he said.—*Tim Shenk of Mennonite Central Committee*

This may be the moment when Burma will open up.—Tom Wenger

Thanks to our donors!

Thanks to all who contributed to *The Mennonite's* operating budget during our past fiscal year that ended Jan. 31, 2008. Your contributions totaled $39,560. We are deeply grateful for this financial support as well as for the many encouraging notes that accompanied your contributions.

For those interested, The Mennonite, Inc., posts a full audit of its financial activity each year at **www.TheMennonite.org** (click on "About *The Mennonite*"). We will also send you a copy of the financial statement if you call 574-535-6053.

www.TheMennonite.org 800-790-2498

1,145 students in five MC USA schools in commencement exercises by May 4

Jim Bishop

Eastern Mennonite University graduating seniors from left: Katrina Alger, Kristina Zaccaria, Andrea Shellenberger, Mikaela Bender and Jameson Jarvis

Eastern Mennonite Seminary
April 26
30 graduates

For John M. Stoltzfus of Stuarts Draft, Va., it was his first commencement ever. Growing up in the Amish Mennonite church in Pennsylvania, he had finished his formal schooling with the eighth grade.

On April 26 Stoltzfus was a member of the Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. graduating class of 2008.

"This is a dream come true," said Stoltzfus. "I lived with a sense of call to ministry for a very long time but never thought I'd see it happen."

Stoltzfus and six others received master of arts in church leadership degrees during the seminary's 59th annual commencement. Fifteen of Stoltzfus' classmates received three-year master of divinity degrees. Two students received master of arts in religion degrees, and six were awarded certificates.

Commencement speaker Marva Dawn, renowned speaker and author, encouraged the class to hold on to disciplines that equip them for ministry.—*Laura Lehman Amstutz*

Eastern Mennonite University
April 27
411 graduates

On April 27 more than 3,500 family members and friends celebrated the achievements of the 411 members of the Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., Class of 2008.

President Loren Swartzendruber awarded 291 undergraduate, 89 graduate, 17 associate degrees and 14 study certificates during the ceremonies to cap the university's 90th anniversary year.

EMU provost Beryl H. Brubaker, who is retiring after 37 years on the faculty, gave the commencement address, "A Metaphor for Remembering." She called the graduates to go out into the world as "bridge builders."

She went on to describe the work of several alumnae who are working at reconciling people in difficult settings—Jessica King, who served as executive director of Union Project in Pittsburgh, Pa., whose aim is to foster constructive relationships among neighbors; Sharon Kniss, who works for an organization called Bridge Builders in London, England; and Carolyn Schrock Shenk, a professor of peace and justice at Goshen (Ind.) College who built a relationship with a local woman whose son is a soldier in Afghanistan.

Some students wore green ribbons to signify their commitment to a graduation pledge which states, "I commit myself to a lifestyle of social and environmental integrity and will seek to improve these aspects of the community in which I work."

The class of 2008 had 90 honors graduates, including three students who finished with perfect 4.0 grade point averages.—*Jim Bishop*

Goshen College
April 27
230 graduates

Goshen (Ind.) College's class of 2008 received degrees on April 27 after being encouraged to be lifelong learners and to reach for high goals by James E. Brenneman, president, and Mukarabe Makinto-Inandava, an advocate for poor people in Africa.

Twenty-seven students graduated with highest honors—grade point averages of 3.9 to a perfect 4.0. In addition, 88 others were on track to achieve GPAs of 3.60 and above. Sunday was the second consecutive year, after a break of four decades, that the college has recognized such academic honors.

Makinto-Inandava urged the graduates to pursue their highest goals, no matter how difficult to achieve and regardless of the obstacles along the way.

Makinto-Inandava is an ordained minister and a co-founder of Amahoro International, a faith-based organization. A native of Burundi, East Africa, *Bluffton University has second-largest class in its history; 37 year provost honored at Eastern Mennonite University; Goshen College again notes GPA*

Jodi H. Beyeler

Mukarabe Makinto-Inandava delivered the commencement address for Goshen (Ind.) College.

Makinto-Inandava rose from an impoverished background to go to college, learn four languages and ease suffering in Africa's war-torn regions.

"As improbable as it seems that an African country girl bound for illiteracy stands in front of you to deliver your commencement speech, it may seem highly unlikely to you that one day you might find yourself in the position of an astronaut, a missionary in Burundi, in Rwanda or in Burkina Faso or why not the president of Goshen College or the president of the United States?" she said. "God has a plan for you, so keep on climbing."—*Richard R. Aguirre*

Bluffton University
May 4
304 graduates

During May Day weekend, May 2-4, the second largest class—304 members—of Bluffton (Ohio) University received diplomas.

Brenda Phillips, commencement speaker, congratulated the graduating class on its achievements and encouraged individuals to continue actively engaging those around them as they find their places in the world.

Phillips is a a professor in the fire and emergency management program at Oklahoma State University and senior researcher in the Center for the Study of Disasters and Extreme Events—and a 1980 Bluffton graduate.

"If you had told me 28 years ago that I'd be doing what I'm doing today, I wouldn't have believed you," said Phillips. "I waited many years for someone to hear what I had to say, and your moment will come too."

On May 3, graduates, alumni and friends took in the annual Maypole dance, which has been part of Bluffton's graduation weekend since 1910.

A senior king and queen, elected by students, presided over the ceremony, which recognized all graduating seniors. This year's king and queen were Jake Ross (Newark, Ohio) and Jenna Patty (Wauseon, Ohio).

The class of 1958 celebrated its 50th reunion and, as a class gift, donated more than $14,000 to the completion of the Circle of Remembrance located at Bluffton University Memorial Field.—*Jill A. Duling*

Hesston College
May 4
170 graduates

On May 4, 170 Hesston (Kan.) College graduates received associate degree diplomas. Terry Shue, a 1977 graduate of Hesston College and pastor of Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church, spoke to graduates, family and friends, faculty and staff on the topic, "Remember as You Become." Shue also spoke at the commissioning of four Pastoral Ministries graduates on May 3. His message was titled "Can you hear me now?"

Also on May 3, 47 nursing graduates received their nursing pins. Guest speaker Vallerie Gleason, vice president of Physician Services at Newton (Kan.) Medical Center, spoke on the topic "The Whosoevers."

Other May 3 activities recognized five graduates of the Disaster Management program and 12 aviation graduates.—*Phil Richard*

God has a plan for you, so keep on climbing. —Mukarabe Makinto-Inandava

Bluffton University

Rachel Alvarez, graduating Bluffton (Ohio) University senior, accepts her diploma from President James M. Harder.

Churches in Zimbabwe issue warning

Statement is 'strongly worded call for international diplomatic assistance.'

A broad coalition of Zimbabwean churches is speaking out against a political crackdown that is under way in their country following disputed national elections on March 29.

Representatives of Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical churches recently issued a joint statement warning that pro-government forces are organizing violence against individuals, families and communities that are accused of supporting Zimbabwe's political opposition.

"People are being abducted, tortured, humiliated by being asked to repeat slogans of the political party they are alleged not to support, ordered to attend mass meetings where they are told they voted for the 'wrong candidate' ... and, in some cases, people are murdered," the churches stated.

Zimbabwe's Brethren in Christ Church is a member of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe, which is one of three church groups that issued the joint statement. The Brethren in Christ Church is a member of Mennonite World Conference (MWC) and a partner of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

Danisa Ndlovu, the bishop of the Brethren in Christ Church, said his denomination supports the statement. Ndlovu is vice president and president-elect of Mennonite World Conference.

Ndlovu said the statement is a strongly worded call for international diplomatic assistance in resolving Zimbabwe's political crisis.

It states, "We warn the world that if nothing is done to help the people of Zimbabwe from their predicament, we shall soon be witnessing genocide similar to that experienced in Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and other hot spots in Africa and elsewhere."—*Tim Shenk of Mennonite Central Committee*

Less mortgage =
more ministry

MMA
Stewardship Solutions

Spending less on your church building could mean you have more to spend on ministry.

Get competitive mortgage rates with no fees from MMA for:

- first mortgage loans,
- construction loans,* and
- refinancing.

Plus, your lenders are fellow church members. Another good example of how MMA provides stewardship solutions to the church community.

MMA's first mortgage church loan rates:
5-year adjustable rate 5.75%*
3-year adjustable rate 5.25%*
1-year adjustable rate 4.75%*

For a free information kit, contact the church mortgage loan department at (800) 348-7468.

*Rates effective May 1, 2008, and are subject to change on a monthly basis. There will be a 1 percent premium on construction loans during the construction period.

Opportunities for psychiatrists in a faith-based environment

Oaklawn, a major mental health provider in the midwest, seeks both a child and adolescent psychiatrist and an adult psychiatrist to join our multidisciplinary staff.

- Located in Goshen, Indiana, a mid-sized rural community
- Two hours from Chicago and three hours from Indianapolis
- Community offers a cost of living 17.6% below national average
- Faith-based heritage; sponsored by Mennonite Health Services Alliance
- Competitive salary, RVU-based incentive, signing bonus, relocation expense, student loan forgiveness
- Call of 1:6 weekends and one weekday every two weeks

To learn about Oaklawn, visit our web site at www.oaklawn.org.
For more information about these positions, contact Human Resources at 1-800-282-0809, ext. 675. All inquiries kept confidential.

OAKLAWN
Toward Health and Wholeness
330 Lakeview Drive, PO Box 809
Goshen, Indiana 46527

Seminary library first with green rating

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary hosts two-day building dedication.

Marking both new and historic opportunities for learning, the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., community gathered for two days of celebration.

"Our hope is in God" was the theme for the April 25-26 events which began with commemorating AMBS's beginnings in 1958. Dedication of the seminary's new library and renovated campus center culminated the celebration.

Nelson Kraybill, AMBS president, noted that before construction on the new building began, "the best theological collection of books anywhere in Anabaptist institutions was in a windowless underground basement, with no ground floor above it."

Kraybill also acknowledged the contributions of Librarian Eileen Saner, who—after initial plans had been drawn up and fund-raising had begun—came to the seminary's administrative team with a new proposal.

"She asked how we could even think of building a library that's not green," Kraybill reported. She asked, "Isn't this part of our theology? If we are going to talk about peace between nations and between peoples, why wouldn't AMBS be committed to peace with God's creation?"

As a result, the AMBS project became the first theological library to register with the United States Green Building Council, following LEED criteria (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). Actual LEED certification will come in the future after an assessment of the green features.

To meet the goal of sustainability for the future, the building has a geothermal ground-source heating and cooling system; it uses no natural gas. Other features include triple-pane windows, efficient insulation, north-facing clerestory windows that allow natural light into the building and photocells that control lighting according to how much natural light is available. Building materials from the region were used as much as possible to reduce the need for transporting them. For example, the 7,041 feet of board trim were crafted by Don Steider, the seminary's director of maintenance, using cherry trees harvested nearby. Rain gardens and prairie grasses around the building will help restore rain water to the underground aquifer and reduce the need for mowing parts of the 40-acre campus.

This dedication service came just five months short of the 50-year anniversary of the dedication of AMBS campus buildings in September 1958.—*Mary E. Klassen of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary*

Mary E. Klassen

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's new building houses the library, bookstore and gallery.

Retirement is not downhill – it can be breathtaking.

Our free booklet, *Your enough,* can help you plan for a thrilling retirement. Call us or visit our Web site today for your copy. Get on track.

(800) 348-7468, Ext. 202
www.mma-online.org

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

© 2007 Mennonite Mutual Aid

CALENDAR

Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb., will celebrate its ***50th anniversary*** June 7-8, 2008. Call 402-761-2709, or e-mail bell606@alltel.net for details.

WORKERS

Aguilar, Lupe, was ordained as pastor of Rey de Gloria Mennonite Church, Brownsville, Texas, on Jan. 13.

Alvardao, Luis, was ordained for chaplain ministry in Borwnsville, Texas, on Jan. 13.

Beck, Bill, ended a term as pastor at Hopewell Mennonite Church, Kouts, Ind., on March 31.

Groff, Philip M., was ordained on Dec. 16, 2007, at Cambridge Mennonite Church, Gordonville, Pa., as associate pastor.

Hinojosa, Eduardo "Lalo," was ordained as pastor of New Life Christian Center, San Benito, Texas, on Jan. 13.

Rice, Jack, resigned Jan. 11 from ministry at Great Shepherd Christian Fellowship, Pen Argyl, Pa.

Smith, Michael G., resigned Feb. 1 from ministry at Cornerstone Fellowship, Mountain Top, Pa.

Weaver, Daryl L., was licensed on Jan. 27 as district youth pastor for the Martindale District, Lancaster Conference.

Yoder, Derek, was ordained for youth ministry at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan., on April 20.

Yost, Rhoda M., was licensed on March 9 at West End Fellowship, Lancaster, Pa., as assistant pastor.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Cressman, Daniel Richard, April 15, to Daryl and Rosalynn Erb Cressman, Kitchener, Ontario.

Eberly, Isaac Christian, April 22, to Peter and Natalie Lehman Eberly, Harrisonburg, Va.

Gaugler, George Hiram V, April 23, to George IV and Angela Ganas Gaugler, Hatfield, Pa.

Giesbrecht, Kirsten Elise, April 1, to Matthew and Jeanette Friesen Giesbrecht, Altona, Manitoba.

Gingerich, Cameron Miles, April 21, to Aaron and Joleen Ropp Gingerich, Kalona, Iowa.

Landes, Lilyanne Grace, April 13, to Jason and Stephanie Landis Landes, Gilbertsville, Pa.

Landis, Addison May, April 27, to Christopher and Jennifer Moyer Landis, Souderton, Pa.

Landis, Ryder Todd, April 27, to Philip and Trina Derstine Landis, Souderton, Pa.

McCracken, Jaron Chase, April 20, to Nathan and Shandra Hostetler McCracken, Hartville, Ohio.

Metekai, Sarina, April 16, to Elijah and Priscillah Parmuat Metekai, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Grael Elizabeth, April 3, to Ryan and Althea Beachy Miller, Kalona, Iowa.

Mounsithiraj, Tavi Dteban, April 15, to Thavisak "Tavi" and Anita Stuckey Mounsithiraj, Goshen, Ind.

Pankratz, Mailey Anne, April 8, to Greg and Julie Miller Pankratz, Inola, Okla.

Ramer, Dominic Devon, April 23, to Derrick and Michelle Wall Ramer, Goshen, Ind.

Rosenberger, Evelyn Mary, April 23, to Andrew and Brandy Cralley Rosenberger, Sellersville, Pa.

Roth, Jayden Leo, April 1, to Daniel and Jennifer Trejo Roth, Grand Island, Neb.

Roth, Moriah Hope, April 26, to Cedric and Lora Myers Roth, Chambersburg, Pa.

Shenk, Gavin Zook, March 24, to Steve Zook and Charity Shenk, Akron, Pa.

Celebrate Fitness!

Celebrating 20 years HOPE

2008 Mennonite Sports and Fitness Classic

June 26-28
at Goshen College

Register now at:
http://marp.mennonite.net/

Questions? 269-353-8515

Sponsored by MARP and MMA
Photo by Jeff Arbogast, *The Goshen News*

Good work...*advanced.*
ADVANCEMENT Associates
Becky Drumm *Principal*
Rich Gerig *Principal*
Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

Susquehanna Valley Pregnancy Services (Lebanon, PA) contracted with AAI for a development audit.

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Mike Wiese, Dan Hess & Sherilyn Ortman, *Associates*

Shetler, Avah Lynn, April 22, to Jim and Jessica Birch Shetler, Asbury, Iowa.

Townsend, Luke Murdock Roberts, March 5, to Dwayne and Stephanie Roberts Townsend, Inola, Okla.

Youssef, Amber Jordyn, April 14, to Gideon and Karen Bond Youssef, Chalfont, Pa.

MARRIAGES

Barron/Beachy: Jessica Barron, Sarasota, Fla., and Kyle Beachy, Sarasota, March 22 at Bayshore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Braul/Dueck: Loren Braul, Kelowna, British Columbia, and Lori Dueck, Winnipeg, Manitoba, March 29 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Cummins/Dick: Hazel Cummins, Tekonsha, Mich., and Waldo P. Dick, Landskrone, Southern Russia, April 12 at Maplewood Mennonite Church, Ft. Wayne, Ind.

Hiltner/Riegsekcer: Kelly Hiltner, Seattle, Wash., and Kelby Riegsecker, Archbold, Ohio, April 26 in Seattle.

Keeler/Martin: Verna Keeler, Souderton, Pa., and Charles Martin, Souderton, March 15 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

King/Wells: Jeremy King, Archbold, Ohio, and Gretchen Wells, Wauseon, Ohio, April 12 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Lamb/Smith: Megan Lamb, Hesston, Kan., and Matthew Smith, Topeka, Kan., April 26 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

DEATHS

Brandt, Ruth Emma Enns Fischer, 95, Hutchinson, Kan., died April 15. Spouse: Elmer Brandt. Spouse: Alfred Fischer (deceased). Parents: Pete and Emma Thurman Enns. Children: Darrell D. Fischer, Merle I. Fischer, Dennis O. Fischer, Loren Brandt, Judy Schmidt; 14 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 21 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan.

Crane, Pistal, 23, Inola, Okla., died March 28 in an industrial accident. Spouse: Rachel Janz Crane. Parents: Pete and Annette Crane. Children: Gage, Jada Pistal. Funeral: April 1 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola.

Delp, Robert W., 81, Sellersville, Pa., died March 19. Spouse: Gloria Stover Delp. Spouse: Myrtle Smith Delp (deceased). Parents: Ephriam and Grace Wismer Delp. Children: R. Michael, Randy, Jeffery; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 25 at Blooming Glen Mennonite Church, Blooming Glen, Pa.

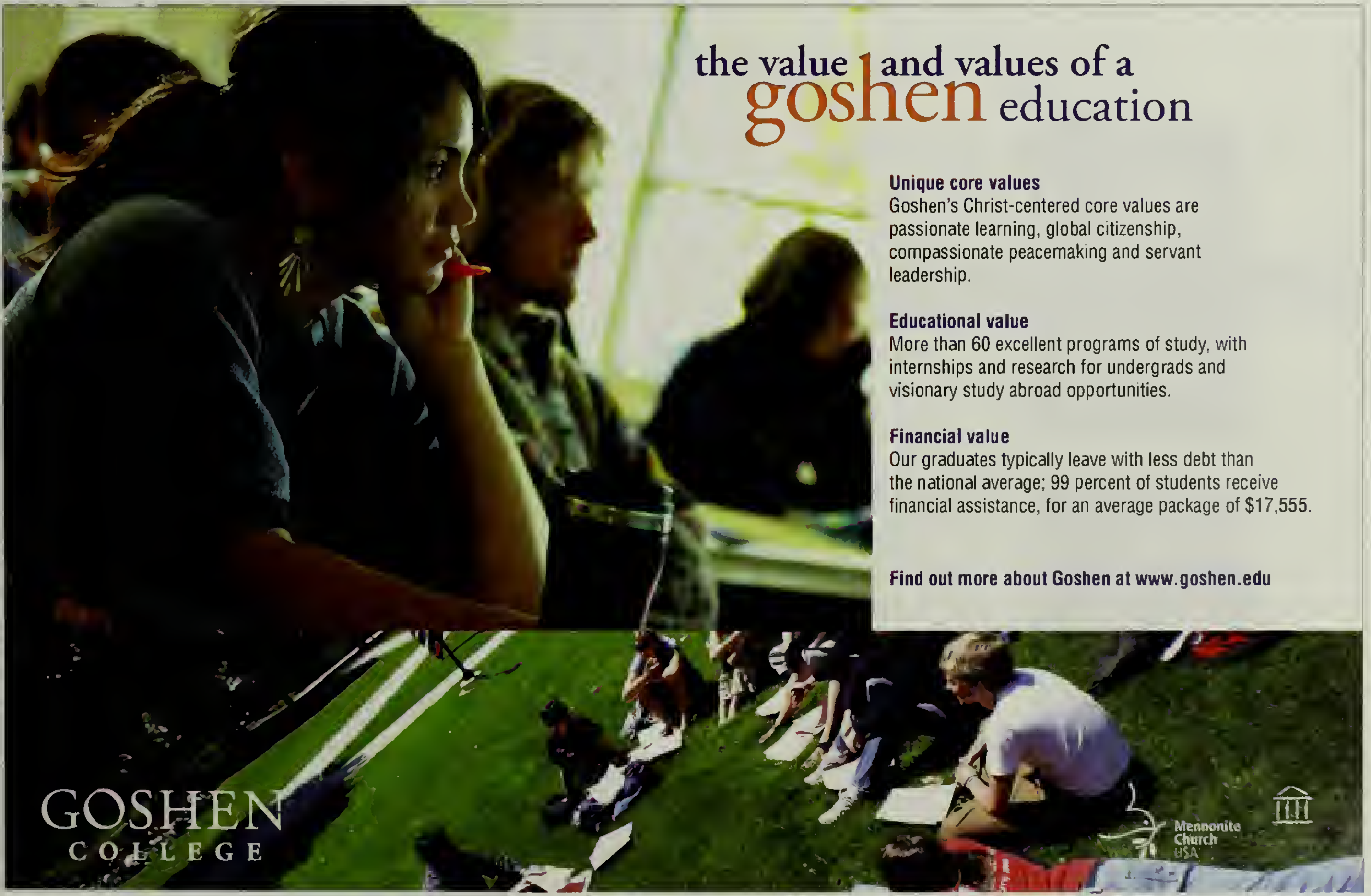
Evans, Annie Bixler, 89, Shreve, Ohio, died Feb. 27. Spouse: Fonza Evans. Parents: John and Katie Bixler. Children: Dale, Hallie White, Evalena Clark, Jerry, Randy; 13 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 3 at Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Fronzoli, Annie Hershberger, 93, Johnstown, Pa., died Feb. 7 of cancer. Spouse: Michael Fronzoli (deceased). Parents: Edward and Lizzie Hershberger. Children: Mary Jane Beisel, Alford, Bonnie Davis, Donald; 11 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 11 at Thomas Mennonite Church, Hollsopple, Pa.

Gingerich, Christy "Crist" J., 92, LaGrange, Ind., died April 21. Spouse: Viola Bontrager Gingerich. Parents: John and Lydia Hershberger Gingerich. Children: Betty Graber, Ida Mae Gingerich; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 24 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind.

Good, Alice Longenecker, 79, Lansdale, Pa., died April 25. Spouse: Claude Good. Parents: Phares and Emma Longenecker. Children: Marcia, Cecilia, Tricia, Carl, Robert; nine grandchildren. Funeral: May 3 at Souderton Mennonite Church, Souderton.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.


the value and values of a goshen education

Unique core values
Goshen's Christ-centered core values are passionate learning, global citizenship, compassionate peacemaking and servant leadership.

Educational value
More than 60 excellent programs of study, with internships and research for undergrads and visionary study abroad opportunities.

Financial value
Our graduates typically leave with less debt than the national average; 99 percent of students receive financial assistance, for an average package of $17,555.

Find out more about Goshen at www.goshen.edu

GOSHEN COLLEGE

Mennonite Church USA

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

Good, James David, 89, Harrisonburg, Va., died April 27. Spouse: Miriam E. Hertzler Good (deceased). Parents: Otto J. and Anna Mary Weaver Good. Children: Barbara Knupp, Ray, Nelson; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 1 at VMRC Strite Auditorium, Harrisonburg.

Good, Lena M. Schmidt, 86, Hesston, Kan., died April 22. Spouse: Lowell Good. Parents: Louis and Lodie Schmidt. Children: Robert, Ronalda Moore; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 24 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Gross, Mabel M. Meyers, 89, Bedminster, Pa., died April 15. Spouse: James B. Gross. Parents: Harvey M. and Mary Leatherman Meyers. Children: Mary Jane Sohar, Gerald M.; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie, Pa.

Henley, H. Ralph, 91, Goshen, Ind., died March 15 of a respiratory infection. Spouse: Elizabeth Sieber Hernley. Parents: Henry Risser and Daisey Cutrell Hernley. Children: Rodney, Roger, Ellen Swanson; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 20 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hertzler, Joseph Shenk, 75, Goshen, Ind., died April 15 of primary progressive aphasia. Spouse: Mary Kathryn Beyeler Hertzler (deceased). Parents: Asa and Rebecca Shenk Hertzler. Children: Julia Hertzler, Teresa Jantz; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 17 at Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Holsopple, Naomi K. Alwine, 89, Archbold, Ohio, died April 23. Spouse: Alvin Holsopple (deceased). Parents: John and Pearl Thomas Alwine. Children: David, Paul, Thomas, James, Mark, John, Mary Miller, Martha Miller; 26 grandchildren; 46 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

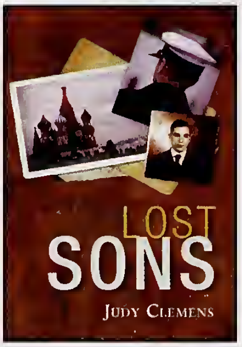
Jantzi, Martha M. Bontrager, 97, Goshen, Ind., died March 22. Spouse: David Jantzi. Parents: John K. and Fanny Yoder Bontrager. Children: Shirley Miller, Dorothy Albrecht, Leon, Robert; nine grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 24 at Evergreen Place at Greencroft, Goshen. Memorial service: March 31 at Alden Mennonite Church, Alden, N.Y.

Klippenstein, Martin, 81, Neubergthal, Manitoba, died April 27. Spouse: Anne Giesbrecht Klippenstein. Parents: John W. and Henrietta Kehler Klippenstein. Children: Warren, Audrey Enns, Tanya Sawatzky, Peter, Karla Neustaeter; 15 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 1 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Martin, Lloyd Steckle, 79, St. Jacobs, Ontario, died April 20 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Gladys Good Martin (deceased). Parents: Annanias and Susanna Steckle Martin. Children: Ron, Darrel, Sharon Martin; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 23 at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

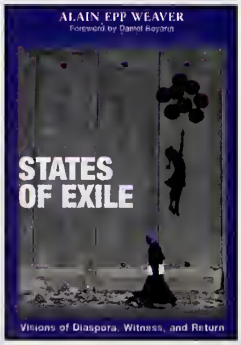
Nofziger, Edna Elnora Blough Eash, 90, Pettisville, Ohio, died April 15 from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Spouse: Robert I. Eash (deceased). Clifford Nofziger (deceased). Parents: Harry and Charlotte Thomas Blough. Children: Sanford Eash, Duane Eash, Mary Kempf, Ruth Klopfenstein, Denver Nofziger, Dean Nofziger, Donelda Richer; 16 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 24 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

New from Herald Press



Lost Sons

"Judy Clemens effectively captures a complex community through the eyes of the troubled Stan Windemere, who is pulled into the mystery of Clayton Kratz—a loss too similar to his own. As Clemens weaves believable and complex characters, we find ourselves connecting with Stan's desperate search and craving answers with him."
—*Ann Groff,* TheMennonite
Paper, 290 pages, $15.99


ALAIN EPP WEAVER
Foreword by Daniel Boyarin
STATES OF EXILE
Visions of Diaspora, Witness, and Return

States of Exile
Visions of Diaspora, Witness, and Return

"Alain Epp Weaver helps us not only imagine new ways of approaching the violence in too much of the Middle East, but also fresh ways to approach questions of theology and politics."
—*Mark Thiessen Nation, Eastern Mennonite Seminary*
Paper, 216 pages, $18.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

Nussbaum, Elrena Hofstetter Lehman, 82, Dalton, Ohio, died March 14 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Willis Nussbaum. Spouse: Chester Lehman (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Lizzy Hofstetter. Children: Virgene Lehman, Karen Garnett, Curt Lehman, Darrel Lehman, Craig Lehman, Lori Napolitan, Joyce Weaver; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; five step-grandchildren. Funeral: March 19 at Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Richard, Ruth Ellen Van Dorien, 82, Loveland, Colo., died April 12. Spouse: Willard Richard. Parents: Harry W. and Ada Fair Can Dorien. Children: Bonnie McDermid, Connie Friesen, John, Debbie Tobias, Ron; 12 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 18 at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen, Idaho.

Richer, Orville Edwin, 88, Mesa, Ariz., and Wauseon, Ohio, died April 15. Parents: Samuel S. and Lucinda Aeschliman Richer. Spouse: Shirley Godwin Glasford. Spouse: Velma Stuckey Richer (deceased). Children: Joe Richer, Margaret Smith, Jim Richer, Ned Richer, Gene Richer, Debbie Mills, Greg Glasford; nine grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; two step-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 20 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Schmucker, Eunice M. Jordan, 80, Louisville, Ohio, died April 19. Spouse: Ivan R. Schmucker. Parents: Everett E. and Alice Hinton Jordan. Children: Gene, June Schmucker Brown; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville, Ohio.

Statum, Christina Louise, 49, Chouteau, Okla., died April 5 of cancer. Parents: Carrol and Magadalena Froese Statum. Funeral: Stephen, Brandon; two grandchildren. April 8 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla.

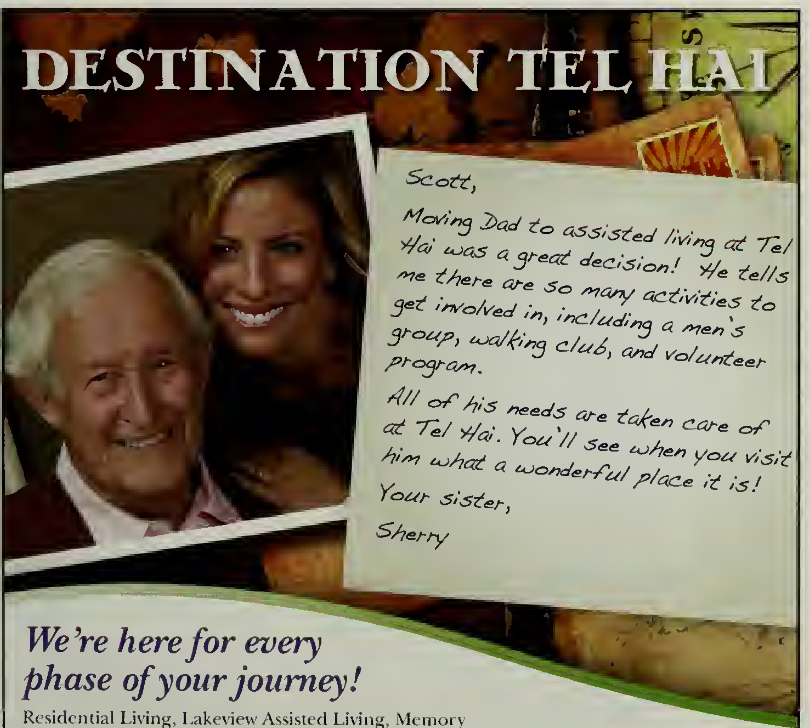
Toews, Philip, 85, Altona, Manitoba, died April 15. Spouse: Shirley Braun Toews. Parents: Jacob and Annie Hiebert Toews. Children: Milton, Russell, Cordelia Unger; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Wysong, Burdette J., 82, Goshen, Ind., died April 12 of Myelodysplasia. Spouse: Elva B. Miller Wysong. Parents: William H. and Ruth Strine Wysong. Children: Diane Fisher, Jolene Coates; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

timely tip:
Practice bicycle safety!

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business. Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.



Scott,

Moving Dad to assisted living at Tel Hai was a great decision! He tells me there are so many activities to get involved in, including a men's group, walking club, and volunteer program.

All of his needs are taken care of at Tel Hai. You'll see when you visit him what a wonderful place it is!

Your sister,

Sherry

We're here for every phase of your journey!

Residential Living, Lakeview Assisted Living, Memory Support Services, Adult Day Services, Meadows Health Care Center, Rehabilitation Services, Child Day Care

1200 Tel Hai Circle | P.O. Box 190
Honey Brook, PA 19344
www.telhai.org | 610-273-9333

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

panpha

Tel Hai
Redefining Retirement™

MCC urgently seeks applicants for MCC Program Reps

1. **West Europe** - Bonn, Germany
2. **Former Soviet Union** - Zaporozhye, Ukraine

MCC Reps provide the program leadership for MCC's international work. They have primary responsibility for bridge-building, collaboration and liaison work with the various Mennonite and other churches in the region. They manage distribution of material aid, develop opportunities to enhance peace programming and provide support for MCC workers in the field.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership, and nonviolent peacemaking.

Contact your local MCC for more information.
Call Toll Free in Canada: 1 888 622 6337
Call Toll Free in US: 1 888 563 4676
View job descriptions on the web at: mcc.org

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

Executive Director. Menno-Hof in Shipshewana, Ind., is a vibrant Amish/Mennonite interpretive center celebrating 20 years of successful operation. Looking for an executive director to exhibit creativity and work with the board of directors to expand and refine vision for the future. Desired qualifications: strong knowledge of the Anabaptist faith tradition; ability to communicate issues of faith and culture passionately. Complete job description at www.mennohof.org. Send resumés or inquiries to Leanne Farmwald c/o Menno-Hof, 510 S Van Buren St, Shipshewana, IN 46565 or lfarmwald@aol.com .

Faith Christian School, grades K-12, in beautiful northeast Texas is seeking ***teachers*** dedicated to Christian Education in a German Mennonite setting. For more info contact Ted Friesen at 903-739-8607 or email: tfriesen@wb4me.com.

The **Salem Mennonite Church**, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alberta, (45 minutes Southeast of Edmonton) is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, Alberta T0B 4J0; fax: 780-662-0106; email salemchurch@live.ca.

***John H. Mosemann: A Preacher's Preacher* by Alfred Albrecht**. A biography, description of interpersonal style, sermon analysis, plus sermon texts; $14.95. 1414 Hampton Circle, Goshen, IN 46526.

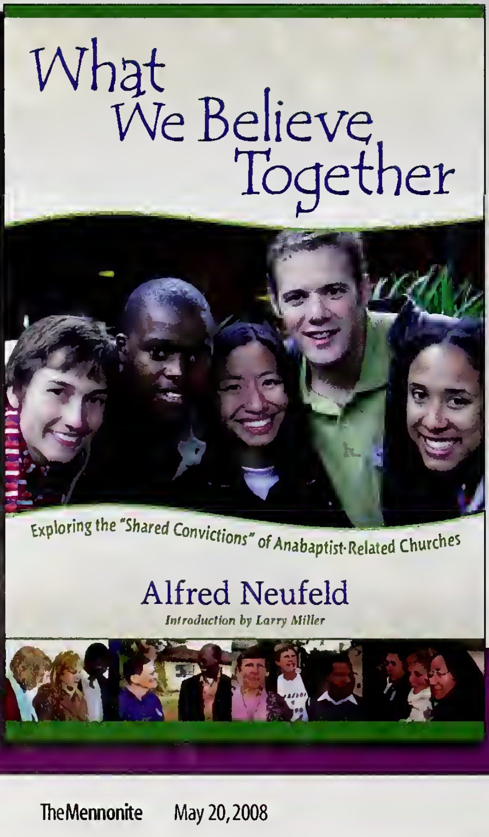
English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Coming to **Montreal** for school or vacation? Support a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada project while enjoying Montreal's trendy "Plateau" district by staying at ***Maison de l'amitié Summer Guestrooms and Student residence***. Student housing available for September. Phone: 514-843-4356, www.residencema.ca reservations@maisondelamitie.ca.

Lake Center Christian School (K-12) is sponsored by area Mennonite churches with a current enrollment of 630 students in Hartville, Ohio (Akron/Canton area). Now accepting applications for the following positions: ***Full-time secondary principal; full-time sixth-grade classroom teacher; full-time high school social studies teacher; part-time positions in physical education, health and yearbook***. For further information, please contact Matt McMullen, Superintendent, phone: 330-877-2049, fax: 330-877-2040, email: lccsmmcmullen@yahoo.com.

Highland Retreat, Bergton, Va., celebrates 50 years in 2008! All former staff (summer and year-round) and board members are invited to a ***Reunion Weekend, June 20-22***. Check the schedule of events and download a brochure at www.highlandretreat.org. Phone 540-852-3226. Email info@highlandretreat.org.

CEO: **Kings View Behavioral Health System** seeks ***CEO*** to lead its large, multisite, Mennonite-founded organization in Fresno, Calif. Their health services include mental health, chemical dependency, drug treatment/prevention, and services for developmentally disabled. Qualified candidates will have senior leadership experience in large organizations, strong financial knowledge, ability to develop productive work culture consistent with organizational values, board experience and passion for the organizational mission. Behavioral health experience preferred, but will consider other disciplines with strong executive skill sets. Candidates contact Kirk Stiffney with MHS Alliance at kirk@stiffneygroup.com or 574-537-8736.


What We Believe Together
Exploring the "Shared Convictions" of Anabaptist-Related Churches
Alfred Neufeld
Introduction by Larry Miller

EVERY MENNONITE SHOULD READ THIS BOOK

Today, more than 1.5 million Christians are members of Mennonite-related churches. They are scattered in 67 countries. They trace their history to the Anabaptist movement, a part of the 16th century Radical Reformation in Europe.

So what beliefs do these heirs of the free-church movement, only loosely connected to each other, hold in common today? This first-of-its-kind book, ***What We Believe Together***, explores seven convictions shared by these churches.

A fresh and up-to-date look at the core beliefs, and the practices that have developed from them, held by Mennonite-related groups around the world today.

5½ x 8½ • 160 pages
$9.95, paperback • Group discounts available.

Published in cooperation with Mennonite World Conference

At local bookstores or directly from the publisher.
Call toll-free **800/762-7171** • P.O. Box 419,
Intercourse, PA 17534 • **www.GoodBooks.com**
Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and AmEx accepted.
Shipping/Handling, add 10% ($3.00 minimum).

Good Books

Mennonite Central Committee is seeking an ***environmental audit project coordinator.*** This person will work with MCC's 12 offices and its international program department to compile a summary of MCC's current environmental impact/carbon emissions. Submit resumés and/or project proposals to Heidi Koole, MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB, R3T 5K9, or HeidiKoole@mennonitecc.ca. Submissions will be considered starting May 30. More information is available at mcc.org/careforcreation/coordinator.

***Executive Director*: Laurelville Mennonite Church Center**, a 600-acre camp, conference and retreat center located in SW Pa., seeks ED. Qualified candidates will need a deep commitment to organization's mission, administrative expertise with budgeting, board relations, staff development, gift of hospitality and ability to cultivate financial support. Candidates contact Kirk Stiffney with MHS Alliance at kirk@stiffneygroup.com or 574-537-8736.

Pastor needed: **Mountain Community Mennonite Church**, located in Palmer Lake, Colo., is looking for a ***full-time pastor***. We are a small church in the Mountain States Conference located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. See our Web site at www.mcmcpl.org. For more information, please contact our conference minister: Herm Weaver at 303-258-7589.

The Communities of Maple Lawn in Eureka, Ill., seek a ***chief executive officer*** to lead their 320-resident/220-staff retirement community. Qualified candidates will have senior leadership experience in large organizations, strong financial knowledge, ability to develop a productive work culture consistent with organizatio's mission. Interested candidates should contact Kirk Stiffney with MHS Alliance at kirk@stiffneygroup.com or 574-537-8736.

Bethany Christian Schools (grades 6-12; enrollment 285) invites applications for 2008-09 for the position of high school English teacher with primary responsibility for senior English courses, including AP English and a Creative Writing elective. Interest in theatre would be an asset. Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure. To apply, submit a resume and letter of application to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499. Phone: 574-534-2567; email: akdueck@bethanycs.net.

Sales: Insurance and financial services

Combine your professional skills and your Christian faith values

MMA®

Stewardship Solutions

MMA, an established, church-related organization, is seeking sales professionals to provide insurance and financial solutions to one of the industry's most loyal markets.

MMA is a highly trusted organization serving individuals and businesses primarily associated with Mennonite and other Anabaptist-related denominations. Excellent income potential and generous benefits. To learn more, visit www.mma-online.org/careers. Fax or e-mail resume to (574) 537-6635 or hr@mma-online.org.

BLUFFTON

EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"I work to position my teaching on the line between church and culture so that my students understand the resources of the church and are able to use these resources to engage the world. I hope my students can recognize in me, and in my teaching, something that is both faithful and intelligible and able to serve the various cultures that they inhabit."

– Trevor Bechtel, assistant professor of religion

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

Clearly the product of intelligent design

Steve Carpenter is conference coordinator for Virginia Mennonite Conference.

Note: Associate editor Gordon Houser, who normally writes this column, is on sabbatical until Aug. 1.

The documentary, *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed,* is quite a contrast to the usual left-leaning videography produced by the likes of Michael Moore. Narrated by Ben Stein, host of Comedy Central's cable TV game show "Win Ben Stein's Money," it explores the premise that "freedom is what made America great … " but some secular institutions of higher education are limiting scientific exploration and academic freedom.

By interviewing professor after professor who lost their jobs for merely suggesting, in peer-reviewed publications, that intelligent design (ID) might be a plausible explanation for the origin of life on Earth, Stein makes a strong case that a conspiracy exists to eliminate anyone who would challenge the accepted evolutionary theory. He describes a type of "political correctness" gone amuck.

In the early 1600s, the Roman Catholic Church was very powerful and held considerable sway over society. Church officials refused to listen to Galileo when he argued from science that the Earth revolved around the sun rather than vice-versa—as was commonly understood from a literal interpretation of Scripture. In 1633, Galileo was tried by the Inquisition for heresy and spent the last years of his life under house arrest.

In our postmodern, post-Christian era, the church and science have switched roles. Many people no longer believe in God but rather rely on the infallibility of science. The film portrays events that suggest that those who hold to the possibility that a higher power was instrumental in creation are being persecuted by the powerful academic and scientific communities.

Stein's calm demeanor and dry sense of humor are disarming. The result: those he interviews open up to him in surprising ways. Stein does not hide his own Jewish faith or the Judeo-Christian faith of most of the professors he interviews. After one scientist tells his de-conversion story, I realized that those depicted in the film who vilify proponents of ID are themselves ardent atheists.

One person in particular goes on a vicious rant against the "hateful … misogynist God … of the Hebrew Bible." Stein postulates that this debate in academia is less about science and more about theology. In many secular universities those who leave room in their research for an intelligent designer are being ostracized, having their research funding cut off, or in some cases getting fired.

There are some very frightening things portrayed in the film, most notably the connection between scientific Darwinism, as understood in contemporary America, and the social evolution practiced in Nazi Germany. The Nazi performed ghastly eugenic experiments promoting the propagation of a superior Arian race. Stein also delivers a body blow against planned parenthood by noting that its founder, Margaret Sanger, was a proponent of eugenics who believed that poor uneducated people should not be allowed to propagate.

You have to pay careful attention to notice the distinction the film makes between creationism and ID. It does not defend biblical creationism but rather supports the right of scientists to ask questions and postulate hypotheses that allow for the involvement of a higher power in the origins of life. Another subtlety is that Stein does not discredit evolution, only a particular Darwinian form of evolution which does not allow for God's hand in creation. Several ID scientists speak in the film of evolution as "God's instrument of design." One credits Darwin with "a valid insight but not the whole answer."

This documentary invites debate between scientists who advocate a Godless evolution and those who make the case for intelligent design. Stein argues academia has erected a wall, similar to the Berlin Wall, that cordons off acceptable and unacceptable avenues of scientific exploration. One interviewee summarizes the films premise when he says, "Questions that aren't properly answered don't go away."

Expelled is clearly the product of intelligent design. It is rated PG, runs 90 minutes and began its theatrical run on April 18. TM

FILMS

Stop-Loss (R) illustrates the provision in all military service contracts that says a service member can be involuntarily extended beyond their discharge (from active duty) date, and at times beyond their final discharge from service date, according to the needs of the service. Brandon King returns to his hometown in Texas, thinking he's getting out of the army after a harrowing time in Iraq. Instead he's stop-lossed, ordered back. This dedicated, decorated soldier goes on the run and considers his only option, leaving the country. Flawed by melodrama at times, the film is well-done and clearly shows its sympathy for soldiers and its opposition to this common, infuriating practice.
—Gordon Houser

FILMS

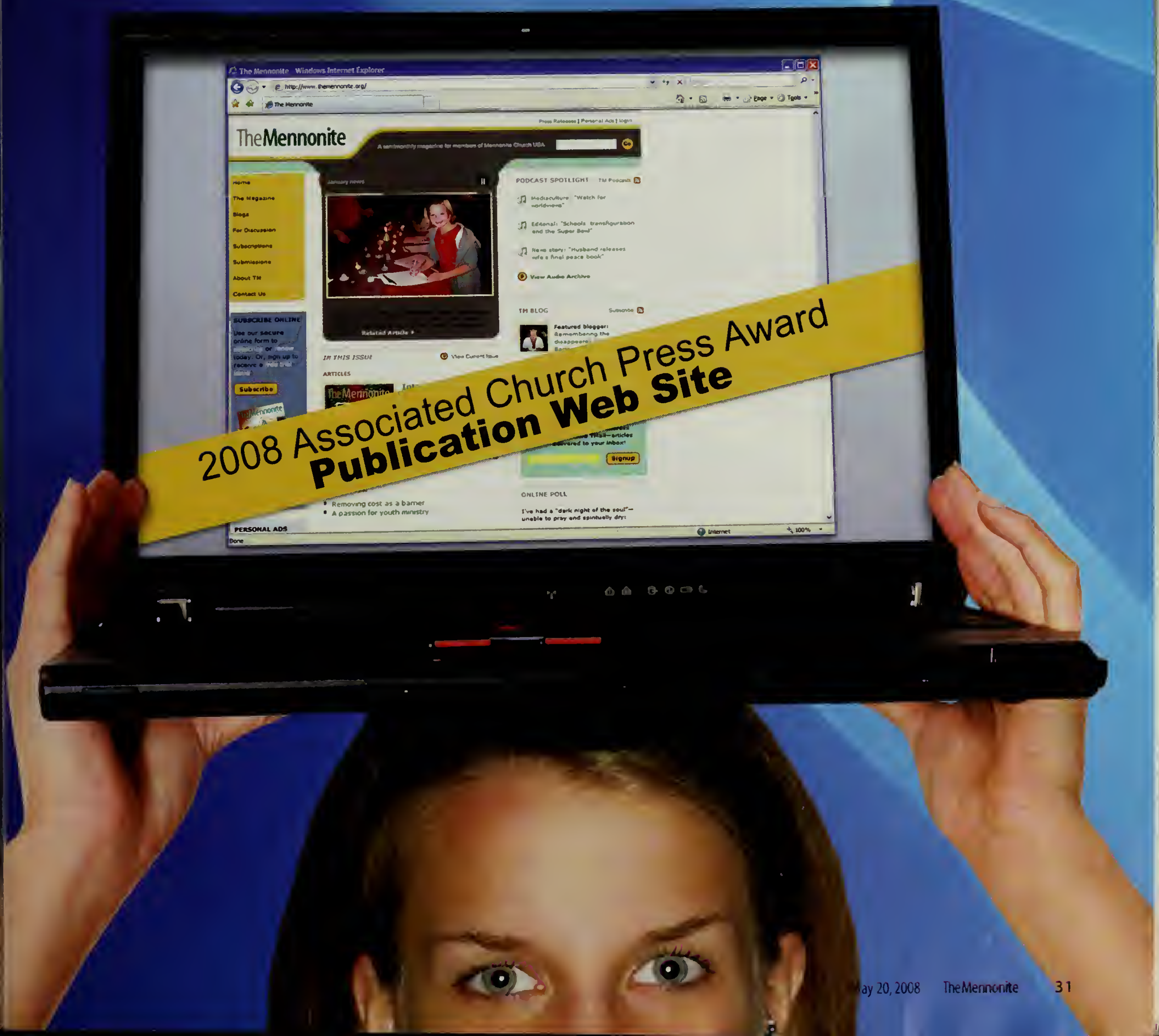
The Visitor (PG-13) addresses immigration and relational issues in a powerful way. Walter, a discontent 62-year-old professor in Connecticut, returns to his apartment in New York City to find it inhabited by a young, charismatic couple—Tarek, from Syria, and Zainab, from Senegal. To Walter's surprise, he befriends them quickly by eating together and taking djembe drum lessons from Tarek. But when Tarek is arrested in the subway and put in detention after a misunderstanding, the friendship becomes complicated. Walter learns Tarek is undocumented and finds himself in the middle of a complicated family crisis. *The Visitor* reminds us of how life-changing cross-cultural relationships can be.
—Anna Groff

Make this your homepage

Make **www.themennonite.org** your homepage and get the latest news, photos, press releases and blog updates right away.

Since we post photos and news releases from all the schools, agencies and conferences, **www.themennonite.org** offers the most comprehensive news coverage available for Mennonite Church USA.

You can also answer poll questions, subscribe to RSS feeds and view videos.


2008 Associated Church Press Award
Publication Web Site
TheMennonite

*************************************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 882 15-DEC-09 66994 35 32
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

The food crisis

If we drive our cars less, poor people will have more food. That seems to be the cause and effect relationship that implicates most of us.

Over the past two months, soaring food prices have sparked serious riots in countries like Haiti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Indonesia.

The current global food crisis may get even worse. Ban Ki-moon, the U.N. Secretary General, says it has the potential to become the worst such crisis in 30 years as those who were once able to buy food face malnutrition and starvation. But the problem is not a lack of food.

"Enough food exists to feed the world's hungry," said an April 25 release from Church World Service, "The problem is that much of the world's poor can't afford food in their local markets."

While the world food supply network is complicated, many of the problems can be linked to the increasing use of fuel and its harm to the environment, record prices for petroleum and destabilization that comes from wars fought over oil.

The victims are not only the "Bottom Billion"—the billion poorest people in the world. For an additional 4 billion people, the spike in food prices will now mean they have even less to eat.

Each of us is responsible to strengthen food security for the increasing billions going hungry.

Mennonite Central Committee has food security programs in 10 countries that have seen serious food riots this year.

"The increase [in the cost of food]," says an April 25 release from MCC, "is driven in part by the growing demand for food from emerging economies—especially in India and China—increased land use for biofuels, a slump in food production because of drought and floods, and high energy costs for producing and transporting food."

Mennonites have been thinking about the social justice aspects of food distribution for more than 30 years. Doris Janzen Longacre's *More-with-Less Cookbook* hit our church in 1976 to help families "establish a climate of joy and concern for others at mealtime, while improving nutrition and saving money."

Three years ago, MCC published another cookbook focusing on food justice. Entitled *Simply In Season*, authors Mary Beth Lind and Cathleen Hockman-Wert note that the average item of food in the United States and Canada travels more than 1,000 miles before it lands on our tables. To mitigate against high-mileage food, the cookbook illustrates why it is important to eat locally grown food in or near the season it was produced.

What would it mean for Mennonites to change our behaviors in ways that would inject some justice into the food crisis? Some suggestions:

- Eat organic foods
- Buy locally grown foods that support local communities
- Reduce meat and dairy consumption
- Purchase wild-caught and local seafood
- Choose whole unprocessed foods
- Avoid processed and packaged food

The suggestions come from the Take the Cool Food Campaign Pledge at www.mcc.org/foods: The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness about the effect of food choice on global warming and reduce our "FoodPrint."

We can also address elected officials about public policy issues connected to food. We can get involved in the debate about the use of grains to make fuel for our vehicles. Once hailed as a way toward "oil independence" for our country, the current effect is to raise the cost to feed the chickens and beef that so many people eat.

Each of us can help also by driving our cars less. Walking, riding a bike or taking public transportation reduces the pressure on oil prices. It also reduces pollution, which in turn mitigates against global climate change that is bringing drought to areas that once produced food.

The most direct affect we can have is to make financial contributions to organizations like MCC and Church World Service. "Food security" is a basic need for everyone. Strengthening this security for the increasing billions going hungry is a responsibility each of us must carry.—*ejt*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

June 3, 2008

God empowers —we serve

Page 8

12 Joining Anabaptist conspirators

16 My ensemble experience

18 All stakeholders should be at the table

32 What is emergent?

When prayer doesn't work

Kenneth Thompson is pastor of Friendship Community Church, Bronx, N.Y.

In my spirituality, I know there is absolutely no reason to believe prayer isn't heard. Yet in our humanity there are private, humbling moments when we wonder. I found comfort in understanding that prayer, like life—even at its simplest—is still so intricate and interrelated. Faith, like peace, is a life journey not just a destination. Jesus Christ reconciles the sincere idealism of our heavenly worship—and the stark realism of our walk in this present world—into a pragmatic idealism brimming with joyful hope and faith each time we pray. True heart-faith is the decreasing of reservations by becoming increasingly persuaded of God's faithfulness, authority and ability in Jesus Christ.

"Why doesn't God answer my prayers? I pray for something and it ends up different or worse! Why would God let my life end up like this?"

I heard those words fall from someone who felt like an unattended soul during a worship service. How do you explain to the depressed and angry why there are times it seems prayer doesn't work and God doesn't listen? Do we say, "If you really have faith you would trust and not have any questions"? No.

I understand now that asking God questions marks the sincerity of one's growing faith and will yield depth of character over time. Because it's the absence, not presence, of questions that make one's faith shallow.

Martha and Mary in Luke's vivid account of Jesus' visit to their home yields some clues why and when prayer doesn't work. Martha welcomes Jesus in. Mary sits and listens, Martha standing, leaves. She goes to another room to do "important" things while Mary stays in his presence still.

Prayer doesn't work when we, like Martha, welcome Jesus into our lives yet find ourselves more active and conscious in "another room" rather than in his presence. Martha was close enough to recognize his voice but too far to hear his words.

A Christian can be close enough to recognize God's voice yet can still be too far away and distracted to hear every living word proceeding from God's mouth. Protect your worship opportunity with God from falling among the "other things to do" list. The mistake we make—along with Martha and the Bethlehem innkeeper years before her—is having Jesus on the property but off to the side, given no room or attention in our main activities.

Learn to highly prioritize and preserve your time with God. Overwhelmed with so many things at once? Master time stewardship, not time management. Management works to get more things done in a day; stewardship works to have more of the day left when you're done. Never risk advancing in work disciplines by sacrificing spiritual disciplines. It's not worth it, and prayer won't work.

Martha returns standing above the seated Jesus and the submitted Mary. Martha interrupts Jesus, tells him to speak to her sister—to whom she didn't speak, the one whose company Martha felt Jesus preferred—so Mary would do what Martha expected of her. Prayer doesn't work when our attitude isn't right, when fellowship with a brother or sister in the Lord is strained, when we are not forgiving of those who disappoint us, and if we feel God is unfair. Mary heard what Martha didn't, received what Martha couldn't and was favored when Martha wasn't. But Mary wasn't a better person; she was in a better position because she made a better choice. Life is about choices. Jesus resisted Martha's summons and praised Mary's choice. God chooses anyone who consistently chooses to be still and know God and his Word.

Prayer doesn't work if you mold it instead of letting it mold you. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 11, June 3, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412 894 8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church USA

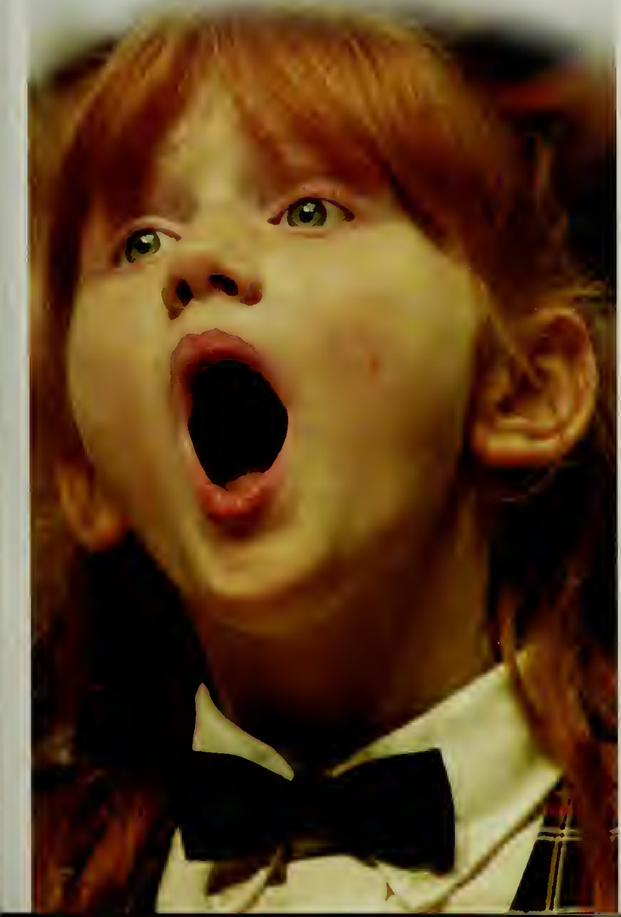
CONTENTS

JUN 3 '08
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART IN

24

6

12


16

8 God empowers—we serve
First Pentecost sermon was so powerful we still have not put it into practice.—*Philip K. Clemens*

12 Joining the Anabaptist conspirators
Activists found in four streams: emerging, missional, mosaic, monastic.—*Tom Sine*

14 Radical ecumenism digs in the dirt
Chapel Hill Fellowship joins Friends to tend plot of land where they worship.—*Isaac S. Villegas*

16 My ensemble experience
An atrocious singer (and even worse musician) follows along.—*Dan Schreiber*

19 The sermons heard 'round the world
At least 10 Mennonite churches offer audio files of their sermons online.—*Anna Groff*

20 Mennonite colleges, universities lead in 'legacy' students and alumni loyalty—*Bonnie Price Lofton*

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
When prayer doesn't work—*Kenneth Thompson*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking out
All stakeholders should be at the table—*Bill Hochstetler*

26 For the record

30 Real families
Doing less smudging—*Michael A. King*

32 Editorial
What is emergent?—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover photo: Laurie Oswald Robinson from Mennonite World Conference in Zimbabwe in 2003

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Is summit being publicized?

I am part of an adult Sunday school class at Waterloo North Mennonite Church that is exploring issues to be discussed at "A People's Summit For Faithful Living" scheduled for July 7-10 in Winnipeg. In class discussion, concern was raised by several people in the class as to balance of U.S. and Canadian delegates at the conference. We understand that the summit was jointly planned by Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada and are wondering how publicity is being handled. To our knowledge there have been no ads or articles related to the summit in *The Mennonite*. Is it being promoted in other ways? If there is very poor attendance from the U.S. side, there will be feelings on the part of Canadian Mennonites who are looking forward to some good dialogue.—*Palmer Becker, Kitchener, Ontario*

Editor's note: The lead news story in our Feb. 5 issue publicized this event (page 19) and an ad appeared in our May 6 issue (page 21). In addition, Mennonite Church USA has distributed bulletin inserts and emails to congregations through area conferences. One of the speakers for the event is Tom Sine; in this issue (page 12) we run a preview of his address.

Avoiding controversy?

On Mother's Day, our adult Sunday school class discussed a rousing sermon by our pastor on the feminine side of God's love. In the class discussion, one person mentioned that there had been an article in *The Mennonite* on the place of Mary for Mennonites ("Learning From Mary," May 6).

I had not read this article. I'll admit that I read the "other" weekly Mennonite publication more regularly—partly because it seems to treat controversial issues more regularly than does *The Mennonite*. But my interest was piqued, and so I did read the "Learning From Mary" article at home. I liked the article, finding that it made some of the same points as our pastor's sermon.

But I was astounded to find that (in the interest of avoiding controversy?) it doesn't mention the Catholic Church! I'm sure that would raise the hackles of many Mennonites, but what a lost opportunity to connect to the millions of Christians in the world for whom Mary is an inspiration. —*Eric Rumsey, Iowa City, Iowa*

Mental illness

I tend to read *The Mennonite* from back to front. So in the May 6 issue, I read Wally Fahrer's, "Is the Church the Army of God?" before reading Clarence Rempel's, "Astounding Holistic Mission." While Rempel's article answered in part the question I had after reading Fahrer's article, neither fully satisfied my query.

Fahrer uses more than half of his article to describe the military model of church that he (and I) find lacking. But then he provides only one paragraph to suggest an alternative: "Evangelism should focus less on eternity, etc." The example he provides of his father receiving a ticket to emigrate from Germany is too simplistic and doesn't respond to how congregations deal with people who come to us with extreme mental health issues (schizophrenia, narcissism, borderline personality) that affect not only their interpersonal relationships but ability to support themselves financially.

I would love to see Fahrer write a follow-up article with some specific examples of how his vision for evangelism, discipleship and mission addresses situations of mental illness.—*Name withheld by request*

Lederach wrong about Joseph

It seems everything we learned as children is up for revision. Joseph may have been a spoiled child because of his father's favoritism, but it seems the Lord God himself took care of that by taking him away from his father most of his life.

But that wasn't God's doing according to James Lederach ("And No Tribe of Joseph," April 15). According to Lederach, nothing was God's providence or care for the Israelites in the whole story. Rather, it was about a son of Abraham becoming so "culturally assimilated" that he "goes over to the dark side."

Wrong. God's providence and plan are all over the Joseph story, and the end bears this out. The brothers were against Joseph, but God used it for

IN THIS ISSUE

Several articles point to changes in the Christian church in general and Mennonite Church USA in particular. Futurist Tom Sine, a speaker at the joint U.S. and Canada conference in July, describes the four streams of "Anabaptist conspirators" (page 12). The editorial follows up on Sine's article with a description of one of those streams: the emergent church (page 32). Isaac S. Villegas describes the "dirty" work of ecumenical relations enjoyed by his congregation (page 14). Philip K. Clemens revisits the question of women in leadership, noting that God's Spirit is poured out equally on all people (page 8). There are also urgent matters confronting Mennonite Church USA, and Bill Hochstetler poses questions about the Executive Board's restructuring plan in an opinion piece (page 18). Should all these articles seem too heavy, enjoy the humor in "My Ensemble Experience" (page 16).—*Editor* good. It remains an example of God's people, enslaved to sin, in need of deliverance, with Yeshua (Joshua) himself leading them into the Promised Land.

Just as Yeshua (Jesus) has delivered us from enslavement to sin and brought us into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Romans 8:21), we also have an example of faith and courage as Joseph trusts God through enslavement, prison, interpreting dreams and finally, directing a relief program unequaled in our Mennonite Central Committee programs.

I interpret a lot of *The Mennonite*'s writers as being willing to ignore the truth to be creative, or unique, in their interpretation. I hope it is only that. God help us if we disbelieve what He says. *—Jean S. Martin, Valparaiso, Ind.*

Muslims are today's Samaritans

Regarding "The Other Good Samaritan" by Eve MacMaster (May 6): In commenting on the story of the thankful, healed Samaritan leper who returned to express his gratitude to Jesus, one comes away with the question, "How inclusive is Jesus salvation?" MacMaster calls for the attitude of inclusiveness that Jesus expressed in similar relationship in our day.

An illustration used briefly in the article is that of Muslims and Christians. To quote her sentence: "At a time when fear and hatred of Muslims is on the rise in this country, most Christians are hiding in the temple, while others are taking the lead in interfaith peacemaking."

Our attitude toward Muslims should not be very different, if any, in our day from Jesus' attitude toward Samaritans. If so, what are the implications for the way Christians relate to their Muslim neighbors across the street and around the world?*—Paul H. Martin, Akron, Pa.*

Wants voices of younger women

Thanks to Anna Groff for the article on women in ministry ("Women in Ministry Trajectories Continue," April 15). As a young woman in ministry, it was helpful to read about the positive attitudes toward women in ministry while realizing there are still some growing edges that need attention.

One part that was missing for me were the voices of women who are in their 20s and 30s. The women mentioned in the article seemed to be well established in Mennonite Church USA. It would have been interesting—and perhaps would have made a more well-rounded article—to hear the perceptions of younger and newer women in ministry.*—Rachel Ringenberg Miller, Portland, Ore.*

A gift of love amidst the sadness

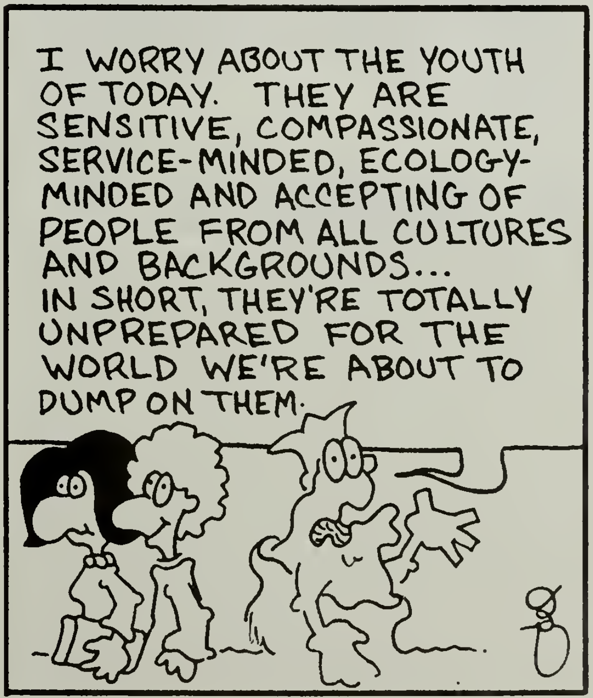
Thank you for the several essay-tributes in the April 1 issue. I was particularly moved by Leona Dueck Penner's loving tribute to her mother ("Giving Thanks at Journey's End"). With Penner, we could share a bit of the journey "of laughing and weeping" as she continued to love and support her mother during the "confusion, sadness and fear" of Alzheimer's disease. In the sadness you offered us a gift of loving care, patience and insight.*—Paul W. Nisly, Grantham, Pa.*

Jesus died for our sins

In the May 6 Readers Say, Myron Miller responds to "Agnus Dei: Lamb of God" (March 18). Miller cites 1 John 2:2 as support for his statement that "Jesus was ... a sacrifice ... for us." That verse, however reads "for our sins." Miller then states, "Jesus was sacrificed in our place; this is the essence of the doctrine of the atonement." The verse cited, Hebrews 10:10, says nothing about "in our place." What Miller presents is the Evangelicals' theory of the atonement, a theory first propounded by Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109).

As a Mennonite by conviction, I understand the Anabaptist theory of the atonement to be that of Christus Victor—that Jesus triumphed over the powers of sin and death epitomized in the Roman Empire that executed him. I do heartily agree with Myron that we are to worship God alone who first loved us and "laid down his life for us." (1 John 3:16, AV).*—Robert V. Clausen, Greenville, Ill.*

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


I WORRY ABOUT THE YOUTH OF TODAY. THEY ARE SENSITIVE, COMPASSIONATE, SERVICE-MINDED, ECOLOGY-MINDED AND ACCEPTING OF PEOPLE FROM ALL CULTURES AND BACKGROUNDS... IN SHORT, THEY'RE TOTALLY UNPREPARED FOR THE WORLD WE'RE ABOUT TO DUMP ON THEM.

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Higher gas prices mean: (56 votes)

- ○ I make fewer trips (52%)
- ○ I walk/bike more (9%)
- ○ Both (30%)
- ○ Neither (9%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

IN BRIEF

EMU graduate wins Lilly award

Donovan E. Tann, a 2008 honors graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., was one of 15 students nationwide accepted into the Lilly Graduate Fellows Program operated by Valparaiso (Ind.) University. Tann plans to enroll in a combined M.A. and Ph.D. English literature program at Temple University in Philadelphia. He has also received an assistantship there. He is a member of Bossler Mennonite Church, Elizabethtown, Pa.—*EMU*

Boers' book in Canadian writing competition

Arthur Paul Boers, associate professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., has been short-listed in a national Canadian writing competition for his book *The Way is Made by Walking: A Pilgrimage Along the Camino de Santiago.* The book traces the experience of walking a traditional 500-mile pilgrimage in northwest Spain. It is a finalist in the Christian Living book category in The Word Guild Canadian Christian Writing Awards. The winner will be announced on June 11.—*Anna Groff*

Lancaster bishops may ordain women

LANCASTER, Pa.—On May 16, the Lancaster Mennonite Conference Board of Bishops approved a credentialing policy that will allow for the ordination of women. The new policy will lodge all LMC credentialing decisions with the Board of Bishops and a recently formed Conference Credentialing Commission. This action follows a Bishop Board proposal that was tested with all credentialed leaders in March and April.

"After a careful review of the feedback received," LMC moderator Keith Weaver said in a May 21 release, "bishops reached a consensus to implement the new policy in the belief that it will respect and honor the variety of ways God's Spirit works in LMC congregations related to the calling and credentialing of persons for leadership roles."

In keeping with a 2006 Bishop Board recommendation, the new policy stipulates that the role of bishop and similar conference oversight roles will be reserved for men.

"The board is aware that this decision will be disappointing and painful for some on either side of the issue," said Weaver. "However, after much prayerful discussion, bishops concluded that this approach represents the best way for the conference to move forward from a difficult impasse."

LMC credentialed leaders had rejected a resolution to ordain women in a January 2007 vote. After the resolution was not passed, Linford King, bishop-overseer for Lancaster City District, ordained Elizabeth Nissley, associate pastor of James Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, on June 24 ("Lancaster Church ordains Elizabeth Nissley," July 3, 2007). King then ordained Janet Breneman, pastor of Laurel Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, on Jan. 20 ("Janet Breneman ordained in Lancaster," Feb. 5).

On Jan. 18, King received a letter from the executive committee of the Lancaster Conference bishop board warning of further action if he ordained Breneman. No further disciplinary action was taken, however.—*Anna Groff*

Todd Hanson

Mennonite agencies provide aid to China

Earthquake survivors sleep outside in Nanchong, a city in China's Sichuan province, after a May 12 earthquake destroyed and damaged millions of homes. Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Partners in China are jointly supporting relief efforts in China following the devastating May 12 earthquake. MCC and MPC are providing $100,000 to churches in Sichuan and the Amity Foundation, a Chinese humanitarian organization, to purchase and distribute food, medicine and temporary shelter materials. MPC, based in Harrisonburg, Va., is a joint program of MCC, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Church Canada Witness and Mennonite Mission Network.—*MCC*

Historical Society honors Jan Gleysteen

GOSHEN, Ind.—Jan Gleysteen, artist, historian, author and storyteller, was honored at the Mennonite Historical Society's annual banquet in Goshen on May 16 with 150 participants.

Longtime fellow employee Mervin Swartzentruber chronicled Gleysteen's work as artist/illustrator, later as editor, with the Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pa.

Willard and Alice Roth described Gleysteen's work as tour leader/interpreter at the sites of Anabaptist-Mennonite beginnings in Europe, as co-founder of TourMagination, and as the author of the *Mennonite Tourguide* to Western Europe.

Don Taylor recited stories from Gleysteen's years as the Mennonite Church's "Heritage Keeper." He included a tribute to Barbara, Gleysteen's spouse.—*Leonard Gross*

MCC seeks $500,000 for cyclone response

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is supporting partner organizations that are meeting basic needs for tens of thousands of people affected by Cyclone Nargis in the southeast Asian nation of Myanmar.

MCC is appealing for $500,000 in contributions for immediate relief response and longer-term recovery and rebuilding in Myanmar.

MCC is applying for additional funds from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to help restore water systems that have been damaged by the cyclone. While MCC does not currently have staff members in Myanmar, MCC has long-standing partnerships with organizations in the country.

"We feel very fortunate to have local partners that are actively responding to the emergency," says Ron Flaming, director of international programs.

MCC is supporting four partner organizations that are providing relief in Myanmar.—*MCC*

Linford Stutzman

urse offers EMS students context in Israel/Palestine

stern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., undergradu-
e students spend a day shepherding in the Nazareth Village
by Becki Day, an Eastern Mennonite Seminary student. Day
ose to research sheep and shepherding in the first century
her project for EMS' "hybrid" course called "The Jesus
vement in the Early Context." This semester, six students
d one professor tested the limits of online and in-person
ucation with the course. The students were all service work-
s living in various locations in Israel/Palestine.—*Eastern
ennonite University*

Bethel students sweep Sider competition

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., swept the seventh annual Anabaptist research paper competition sponsored by the Sider Institute at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

The first-place award of $500 went to Jordan Penner, senior from Reedley, Calif., for his paper "Gaining a voice: Hispanic Mennonites in North America." Meredith Lehman, sophomore from Bluffton, Ohio, took the second-place prize of $300 for her paper "Poetry and politics: Gender-inclusive language in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*." Peter Miller, senior from Partridge, Kan., won the third-place prize of $200 with his paper "Prophecy and pacifism: Mennonite response to the Arab-Israeli Wars of 1948 and 1967."—*Bethel College*

AMBS honors Jacob Elias for teaching 31 years

ELKHART, Ind.—Jacob W. Elias, professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, was honored by seminary faculty, staff and students on May 10 after he retired from 31 years of teaching.

In his teaching and scholarship, Elias focused on the writings of the Apostle Paul. Elias will become professor emeritus of New Testament in July, when he officially leaves his teaching post at AMBS.—*AMBS*

Mennonite history essential books announced

GOSHEN, Ind.—The April issue of *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*, published by the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee, has compiled "The Essential Anabaptist/Mennonite History Reading List."

The 31 titles on the list include general Mennonite histories as well as volumes on women, African-Americans, Hispanics and the international church. The list also includes reference books, such as the five-volume Mennonite Encyclopedia. It was compiled with input from about 40 professors, teachers, writers, librarians, archivists and others in the field of Mennonite history.

The oldest book on the list is *The Martyrs Mirror*, first printed in 1660, while the newest are *Stories: How Mennonites Came to Be* by John D. Roth and *Testing Faith and Tradition*, the Europe volume in the "Global Mennonite History Series," both of which were published two years ago.—*Mennonite Church USA*

New *Mennonite Your Way* directory compiled

MUNDELEIN, Ill.—*Mennonite Your Way* (MYW) *Directory* is a listing of 1,700 hosts who offer space in their homes on a "for a donation" basis.

Between now and August 2008, those wishing to be listed as hosts in the new *MYW Directory* for 2009-2011 can register. Additional hosts are needed in most countries and communities.

Copies of the current directory for the 2008 travel season are available on a donation basis. To order your copy, send an e-mail request to myw@mennoniteyourway.com or leave a phone message at 847-949-5179 including your postal address.

For more information, visit www.mennoniteyourway.com.—*Jay and Glola Basler*

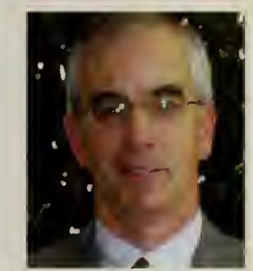
Mennonites support communicators meeting

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Religion Communication Congress 2010 will bring together more than 1,000 communicators to explore the theme Embracing Change: Communicating Faith in Today's World scheduled for April 7-10, 2010, in Chicago.

Mennonite Church USA is a cooperating organization for the event. Melodie M. Davis, writer and producer for Mennonite Media, and Ron Byler, associate executive director of Mennonite Church USA, are participating on the planning committee.—*Mennonite Media*

—*compiled by Anna Groff*

IN BRIEF



Hess is interim CEO at Philhaven

The Philhaven Board of Directors appointed the current chief operating officer, Phil Hess, to serve as Interim CEO while the board continues its search for a new CEO to succeed LaVern Yutzy who is retiring. Hess joined Philhaven, Mt. Gretna, Pa., in 1988 and has served as COO since 1993.
—*Philhaven*

New nonviolent video game

A new video game, "Cool School," emphasizes nonviolent interaction. It takes players through a school where just about everything (desks, books and more) have their own personality. Designed at the University of Maryland, the game is to teach students how to solve social conflict through skills like negotiation and cooperation. The project began when Congress allocated funding to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to create a video game. It was planned to be shared throughout every U.S. elementary school until its funding was slashed. The game is now being digitally distributed, and its spread through the school systems is much slower than originally intended.—*Ars Technica*

It was a spectacular display. Fireworks and the sound of a violent wind took the people by surprise and turned a typical celebration into an unforgettable event. Today we are still drawn to those amazing signs of Pentecost, and reenact them in our worship.

God empowers

2003
Hamoomba
Zambia
Lutheran Centre

—we serve

by Philip K. Clemens

First Pentecost sermon was so powerful we still have not put it into practice.

But while enamored with such a demonstration of the Holy Spirit's outpouring, we tend to overlook God's creative and powerful word on that day, expressed through Peter's passionate preaching. God's word was so radical that the church of the New Testament had difficulty putting it into practice, and we are still working at it today.

All flesh: Peter draws on the prophecy of Joel: In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh (Acts 2:17).

The earliest church consisted mainly of people who came from the Jewish heritage, and many of them incorrectly believed that the Christian church was open only to those who were circumcised.

Peter himself played a significant role in facing that issue as he carried the gospel to the uncircumcised Cornelius. After he had gone and baptized Cornelius, Peter had come back to Jerusalem only to run into stiff opposition from church people who accused him of breaking church laws.

So Peter told them how God had commissioned him to go and baptize Cornelius and compared that event to Pentecost:

"As I began to speak [to Cornelius], the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning [at Pentecost]. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?" (Acts 11:15-17 TNIV).

Unfortunately much of the Christian church through the ages has been standing in God's way. For some reason God's declaration that the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh has not been fully addressed.

The New Testament is full of instruction, some of it quite pointed, on how to relate lovingly to each other. The apostle Paul, for instance, needed to remind the church that Jews and Greeks, slaves and free, males and females are included in the church. Why do we add our own requirements to God's word, instead of taking God at his word?

Different denominations of the church claim to have the true word—and others don't. Then, too, some think that America is a Christian nation and wrongly go to war in an attempt to establish the righteousness of the United States. And sadly, many of our Christian missions around the globe have preached the culture of North America rather than the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Why do we add our own requirements to God's word, instead of taking God at his word?

God declares, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh."

Men and women. God's powerful word through Peter on Pentecost continues:

… [Y]our sons and your daughters shall prophesy … Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy (Acts 2:17-18).

Again, unfortunately, much of the Christian church through the ages has been standing in God's way. Instead of following God's word and applying that to our understanding of the world, we tend to follow the way of the world, and apply that to our understanding of God's word. Just because the world views men as superior to and more important than women, the church should not follow the world.

Some religious leaders say that women must serve men but men not serve women, that men can be preachers but women can't. Why do we add our own requirements to God's word, instead of taking God at his word?

The New Testament comes from times during which the earliest church was being shaped, and its writings are evidence of how tough a struggle that was.

But what about those verses in the New Testament that appear to say women are not to teach or to be pastors? It is clear that the message of the New Testament celebrates the giving of God's gifts to both women and men, but also includes both positive and negative references to women as ministers.

As we know, we can prove almost anything by quoting isolated Bible verses to our advantage. So it is important that we place every book of the Bible fully within its context.

First Timothy and Titus are frequently quoted to prove that women cannot be pastors—ever. On close reading, however, we find that these epistles were written to experienced pastors as specific instructions for dealing with crisis situations in Ephesus and Crete. The two pastors already knew how to organize churches. The new instructions were sent to deal with conditions that required special care, to serve as remedial help for the purpose of bringing the congregations back to divine expectations proclaimed on Pentecost and described elsewhere in the New Testament.

If we believe that certain verses from 1 Timothy and Titus do not allow women to exercise specific leadership positions and that they are instructions for all time, then we must accept that every verse of those two epistles is an instruction for all time. That would mean, for instance, that only married men—but married only once—with children (respectful ones) could serve as bishop or overseer. And that women are saved through childbearing. And what about the instruction to drink wine, and the fact that 1 Timothy and Titus disagree on whether a woman is supposed to teach?

Certainly the Bible is God's written word, but we cannot treat it as a rule book from which we arbitrarily select laws, or choose which instructions to obey or disobey.

However, if we accept the message of the whole Bible, beginning with Creation, moving to the transformation of Re-Creation in Christ and following on to God's powerful word on Pentecost, then we can wholeheartedly receive God's foundational declaration: All women and men from all the tribes of the earth may receive God's Spirit in order to prophesy.

The New Testament comes from times during which the earliest church was being shaped, and its writings are evidence of how tough a struggle that was—as the story of Peter and Cornelius shows.

The New Testament is a record of how the early church worked at interpreting God's word, a discerning task that is still our duty under the Holy Spirit. For us to see that the early church was not able to put everything in order immediately can be an encouragement, both as a reminder that the church always consists of fallible human beings like us, and that our goal is to fulfill God's righteous word, not our human desires.

Commitment to Christ. I am thankful that Mennonite Church USA honors the call of both women and men to ministry. Article 15 of Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective states:

We believe that ministry continues the work of Christ, who gives gifts through the Holy Spirit to all believers and empowers them for service in the church and in the world. … The church calls, trains and appoints gifted men and women to a variety of leadership ministries on its behalf. These may include such offices as pastor, deacon and elder as well as evangelists, missionaries, teachers, conference ministers and overseers.

Ohio Conference Minister Tom Kauffman writes: "Our obedience to God's call is more important than our innate skill set or character. Our obedience opens the door to God's gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit to empower us to accomplish the task that God has for us" (*Ohio Evangel*, April-May 2007).

It is not the gifts we bring to God that matter. What matters is that we bring ourselves. Then Christ provides the gifts needed for his mission.

In light of God's Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh—including on men and women—I cannot, with integrity, limit my commitment to Christ by offering myself as coming from only a certain ethnic heritage, or as either male or female.

I offer myself—whoever I am. And as God continues to bless all kinds of Christian believers with divine gifts, I along with Peter must confess, "Who [am] I to think that I [can] stand in God's way?"

As individuals and as a people of God, let us commit ourselves to Christ with open hearts and minds: "Here I am, Lord, your servant; empower me with your Spirit."

Philip K. Clemens is pastor at Pike Mennonite Church, Elida, Ohio, and author of Beyond the Law: Living the Sermon on the Mount *(Herald Press). This article is adapted from his sermon at Pike on May 27, 2007.*

Much of the Christian church through the ages has been standing in God's way. For some reason God's declaration that the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh has not been fully addressed.

Joining the Anabaptist conspirators

by Tom Sine

Stockxpert.com

God is doing something new through a new generation that has a distinctly Anabaptist accent in these uncertain times. These young initiators are creating new ways to make a difference in both the world and the church. In *The New Conspirators*, I explained these activists and innovators as being found in at least four streams: emerging, missional, mosaic and monastic.

The **emerging** church stream seems to have its beginnings in Britain in the late eighties. Essentially those in this stream are seeking to plant new expressions of church that are contextualized to engage the postmodern young. For example, Ian Mobsby has started a new Anglican Church plant in London called Moot. They use ancient symbols, arts and liturgy as well as visual material from popular culture to engage the urban young that wouldn't typically attend a traditional church. There are hundreds of emerging church planters who are planting churches like Solomon's Porch in The Twin Cities or Church of the Beloved in Seattle. Emergent Village, The Ooze and Youth Specialties provide events where these young initiators gather.

The **missional** stream didn't begin with young practitioners but with academics that are a part of The Gospel and Culture Network. They are committed—out of the influence of the writings of Lesslie Newbigin—to call the church in North America to put mission much more at the center of congregational life. Their book, *The Missional Church*, published in 1991, really got the ball rolling. However more popular books, like Alan Hirsch's *Forgotten Ways*, have really increased the buzz. Unfortunately much that flies under the missional banner is little more than buzz. But there are a growing number of young church planters who are a part of traditional denominations, like the Covenant Church in America, who are planting missional churches that focus on addressing the needs of those outside the building instead of creating programs to meet the needs of those inside the building.

Much that flies under the missional banner is little more than buzz.

For example, Tim Morey planted New Life Covenant church in Torrance, Calif., three years ago. What makes this church different from most established churches is that it has no programs for people inside the church. The 300 members meet for worship once a week in a rented hall. The only other time they meet is in small groups to create ways to meet the needs of those in their community, and virtually every member is regularly involved in mission to people in their community instead of those in the building, and 30 percent of their income is invested in local and global mission.

Without question the **mosaic** stream is the least visible of the four streams. It is comprised of those starting multicultural churches like Efrem Smith's Sanctuary Covenant Church located in a tough urban neighborhood in Minneapolis. Like the missional churches, these new congregations also tend to focus more outwardly in mission. In fact 50 percent of the budget of this church is also invested in addressing the urgent needs in their neighborhood as well as the needs of those at the margins in poorer countries. This four-year-old church plant has about 800 members. The congregation is about 40 percent African-American, 40 percent European and 20 percent Latino and Asian. They are discovering not only how to focus more outwardly in mission but how to celebrate God's multicultural kingdom together.

The **monastics** comprise the fourth stream. Few in this stream have any interest in church planting. These activists are moving into cities all over the world, living in community and working with the poor. They are a new kind of Franciscans. They include groups like Word Made Flesh, InnerCHANGE and Servants With the Poor. The New Monasticism Movement was born in 2005. It includes groups like the Rutba Community in Raleigh Durham, N.C., and the Simple Way in Philadelphia. But this movement also includes older communities like Reba Place in Illinois and Sojourners Community in San Francisco. This stream is concerned about not only reaching out to those in need but seeking to embody something of God's new community in their life together. In fact Shane Claiborne, a member of The Simple Way Community, is becoming a new young prophetic voice from this stream calling the entire church to work for justice and peace.

One can hear a distinctly Anabaptist accent as these young conspirators in all four streams invite all of us to embrace a more radical, whole-life faith and to create churches that are more outwardly focused in mission. As Jim Wallis has observed many of these young activists have turned away from the influences of the religious right to embrace a more biblically progressive agenda for social transformation. They are consistently much more committed to working for social justice, racial reconciliation and caring for God's good creation than many of the churches from which they come.

While those in all four streams share many common concerns with those of Anabaptist faith, the clearest Anabaptist voice is coming from those in the monastic stream. Let me take you on a quick tour of young Anabaptist activists that God is raising up all over the world—many of whom are a part of this stream.

Let's start in Britain. The Mennonite Center in

Activists found in four streams: emerging, missional, mosaic, monastic

the UK has had a remarkable influence in traditional churches in Britain through the writings of authors like Stuart Murray, who is calling the young to create new counter-cultural, post-Christendom expressions of church. One group of young people inspired by this influence is called SPEAK. SPEAK is composed of college and post-college young adults to raise awareness in the UK regarding global warming, social justice and fair traded products. They are inviting their collaborators to become a part of monastic networks and embrace a rule of life that includes vows of simplicity, prayer and action. One of their campaigns, for example, is to lobby universities in the UK to sever their ties to the arms trade, and they also lobby against weapons made in the UK being used against civilians in Palestine (www.speak.org.uk).

In Australia, the Peace Tree Community and EPYC (Empowering Peacemakers in Your Community) call young and old alike to consider embracing the biblical call to work for nonviolence and justice. They are a part of the Anabaptist Network in Australia coordinated by Mary and Mark Hurst. Jarrod McKenna is a young "peace evangelist" for EYPC who trains both young people and adults in nonviolence and just and sustainable lifestyles in Australia, and he is also a member of the Peace Tree Community.

Jarrod writes, "This generation does not need more slick entertainment or clever answers to numb us to what is really happening in our world. Instead they long for a space where the deepest questions can be explored with people who are authentically living an alternative." Seven people live in the Peace Tree Community in a poorer community in Perth. These young activists rise for morning prayers at 6:30. They coordinate a community garden, and they also share food they glean from dumpster-diving with their aboriginal neighbors. They also conduct nonviolent demonstrations at Australian military bases and at the Baxter Detention Center for asylum seekers and refugees (www.suwa.org.au/parts/epyc/).

In North America there is a growing chorus of young voices for peace, justice and creation care—many of whom are not Mennonite. These groups include Jesus Radicals, Convergent Friends and Submergent. Submergent is an emerging global network of those with Anabaptist inclinations that includes many Mennonites, but is not a part of the Mennonite church. It is seeking to connect not only in the UK and Australia but to those with Anabaptist interests in the two-thirds world (www.submergent.org).

One of those involved in creating this network is Mark Van Steenwyck, who has started a new Mennonite church with a monastic flavor, called Missio Dei, in a poorer community in Minneapolis. This small group offers hospitality, sponsors an urban garden and reaches out to those in need.

One of the most creative contributions from young Anabaptists in North America was the launching of *Geez* magazine in Winnipeg Manitoba. The byline on the cover of *Geez* reads, "holy mischief in an age of fast faith" (www.geezmagazine.org).

In their issue on consumerism, they promoted "The de-motion campaign." In the Spring 2006 issue of *Geez* the editor wrote, "It's time to start preparing for the practical and spiritual transition to a post-oil era. So let's de-motorize our souls, localize our lifestyles and de-normalize fossil fuels. We want to hear about your de-motion experiments. Send your ideas of how we can joyfully, collectively and effectively move beyond oil."

These new Anabaptist conspirators have the possibility to be agents of renewal in historic peace churches. But they also have the possibility of calling growing numbers of other young people from outside the Anabaptist tradition to join a more biblically radical approach to life, faith and witness for peace, justice and creation care.

Shouldn't we all encourage these new conspirators? Shouldn't we also join them by seeking to put God's kingdom purposes much more at the center of our lives and congregations in these uncertain times?

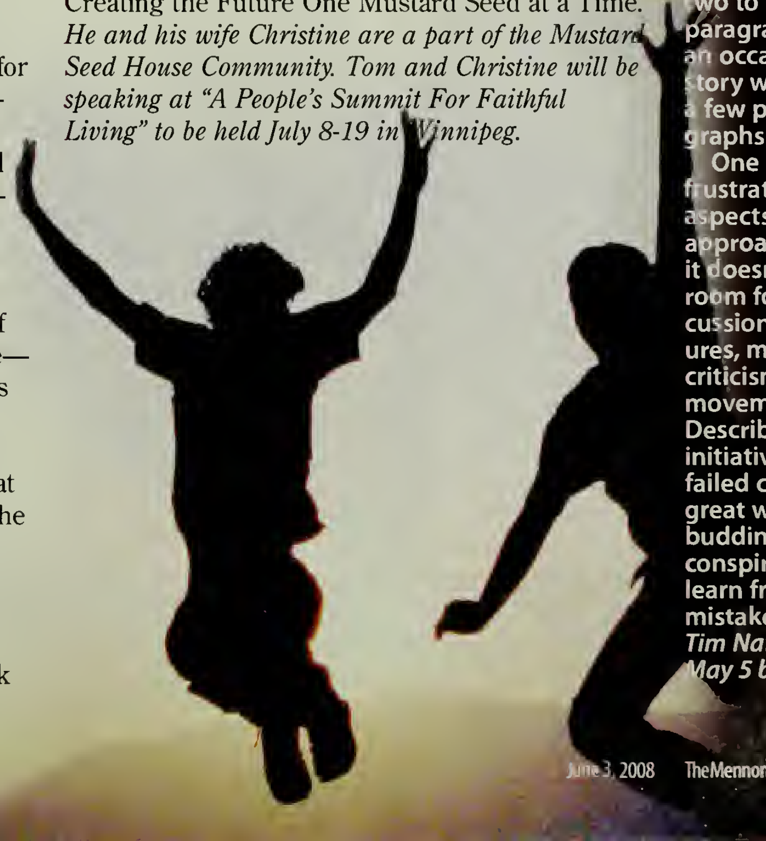
Tom Sine is a convinced Anabaptist, an author and a futurist. His latest book is The New Conspirators: Creating the Future One Mustard Seed at a Time. *He and his wife Christine are a part of the Mustard Seed House Community. Tom and Christine will be speaking at "A People's Summit For Faithful Living" to be held July 8-19 in Winnipeg.*

Excerpts from our blogger's review:

To put it simply, Tom Sine's, *The New Conspirators: Creating the Future One Mustard Seed at a Time* is an encyclopedia of the new movement in the evangelical church in Australia, Canada, Britain and the United States.

As an introduction to the emerging, missional and mosaic (multicultural) church and New Monasticism, the book covers a huge amount of ground. Each church, initiative or organization is described in two to three paragraphs with an occasional story warranting a few paragraphs more.

One of the frustrating aspects of this approach is that it doesn't leave room for any discussion of failures, mistakes or criticisms of the movement. Describing a few initiatives that failed could be a great way for budding new conspirators to learn from their mistakes.—*from Tim Nafziger's May 5 blog*



Radical ecumenism digs in the dirt

by Isaac S. Villegas

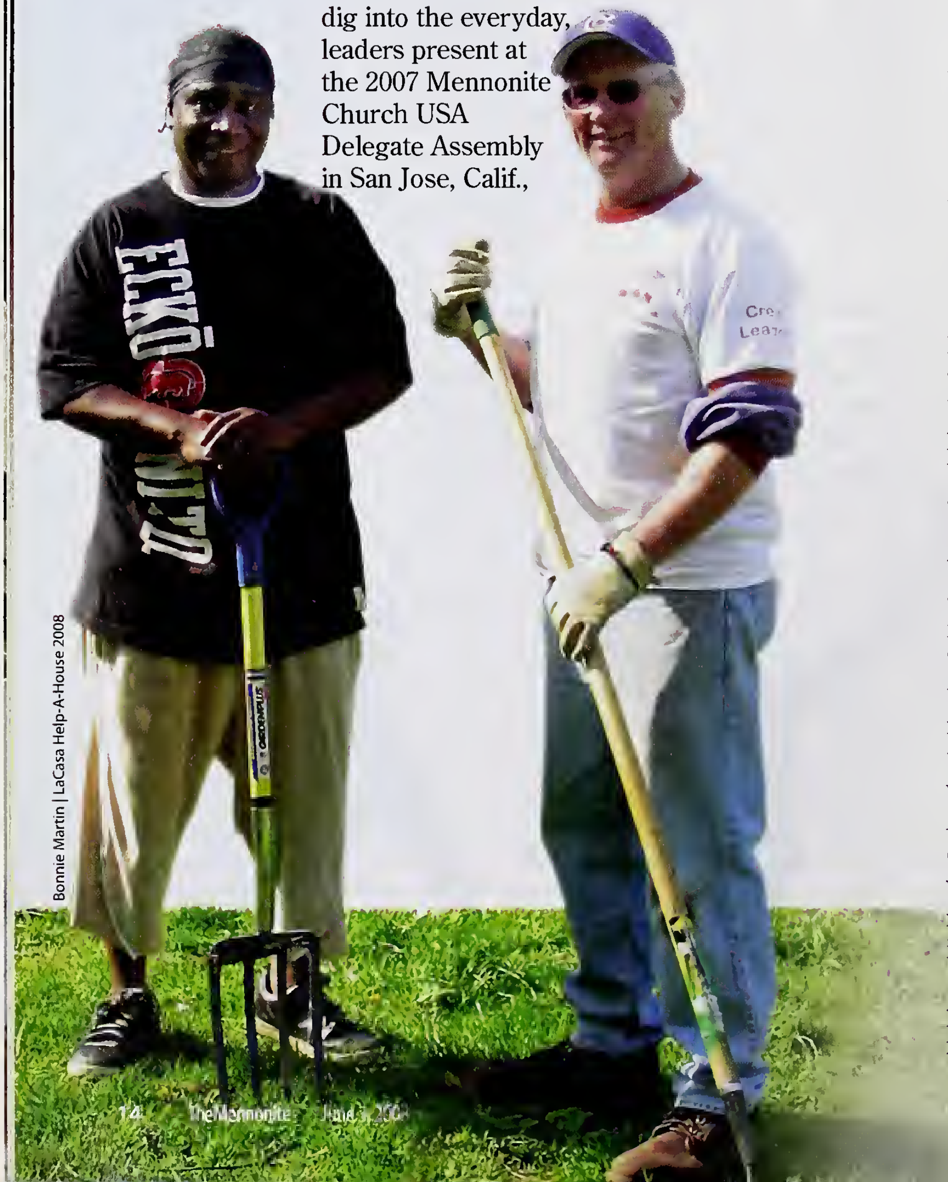
When people talk about ecumenism, it usually refers to something church leaders do. But our congregation's summer morning of ecumenism had more to do with the ordinary—the everyday—not an annual gathering. It was, literally, about grass and about roots.

We forget that our ecumenical work is also our missional work.

We were a handful of Quakers and Mennonites who gathered to tend the plot of land where we worshiped. A few people from our Mennonite congregation joined folks from the Friends Meeting House for a summer work day. Our bodies combined forces to rake leaves, pull weeds, trim hedges and perform other necessary chores to keep up our common worship space.

Our small Mennonite church rents space from the ever-so-friendly Quakers. They have their silent meeting on Sunday mornings, and we get together in the evenings for our different form of worship. Our ecumenical relationship is rooted in local intimacies: We share the same sacred space that is at the heart of our different lives of faith.

While we worked at the level of the roots that dig into the everyday, leaders present at the 2007 Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly in San Jose, Calif., worked in the leaves and branches. Our delegates decided to link our denomination to the ecumenical organization called Christian Churches Together.



Bonnie Martin | LaCasa Help-A-House 2008

As the Delegate Assembly handbook says, this union will "enable churches and national Christian organizations to grow closer together in Christ in order to strengthen our Christian witness in the world." The vision for this organization, and our participation in it, takes seriously Jesus' prayer to his Father for all his disciples: "May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You sent me and have loved them even as You have loved me" (John 17:23). Our Christian unity across differences displays the kind of love God has for us. It's an essential task of tending to the body of Christ.

But now we ordinary, everyday sorts of Mennonites discover a temptation: Since someone else in our denomination is taking care of ecumenical concerns, we don't have to worry about it. We can wash our hands of the whole matter and get on with what we consider to be more important goals. Now we can focus our time and money on the missional call to convert our churches into spaces that welcome popular culture. For, as the barrage of Christian books and conferences declare, missional programs and outreach will save our dying churches. But many of our missional experts forget the fundamental relationship between our missional call and our ecumenical call. We forget that our ecumenical work is also our missional work.

Lesslie Newbigin, a quotable missionary and pastor of the 20th century, is a favorite among our contemporary missional thinkers. Newbigin taught us Westerners to see how missions not only take place overseas, but must happen in our own culture. We need to be missionaries in the lands we call "home."

But for Newbigin, we fail to be missionaries of the gospel when we divorce our witness from the call to be a unified church. His insight may be an important midstream correction to our emphatic "missional church" sloganeering. For Newbigin, the missional church is nothing other than the ecumenical church. As he says, "That which makes the Church one is what makes it a mission to the world" (quoted in Geoffrey Wainwright's *Lesslie Newbigin*, page 83). This line is simply a reflection on John 17 where Jesus tells the disciples that their witness is their unity, their bond of love, that is the movement of God's Spirit. Our love for one another is our missional preparation and invitation.

For Newbigin, this ecumenical work that accompanies our missionary encounter with our cultures is not something that must happen among denomina-

Chapel Hill Fellowship joins Friends to tend plot of land where they worship.

tional representatives. Instead, our ecumenical vision must focus on the local landscape, on what he calls "organic unity." The hard, slow and messy work of church unity finds success in "the emergence of reconciled local communities." The goal is to "express locally the whole of the Catholic church."

By no means does this discourage our denominational involvement with large-scale ecumenical organizations like Christian Churches Together or the Mennonite-Lutheran dialogue. In fact, Lesslie Newbigin was an important participant in worldwide ecumenical organizations. But Newbigin helpfully reminds us that those organizations, like Christian Churches Together, are important only in so far as they serve our communities as we rub shoulders with other local churches.

To be missional is to be ecumenical. The missional church is the ecumenical church. They are two arms of the same body—and if we think we can separate them, if we think we can pursue one and not the other, then we tear apart the body of Christ. The Spirit that beckons us into the wilderness of this world is the same Spirit that draws us into fellowship with friends and strangers and enemies, even across denominational lines. If we choose one and not the other, then we should wonder if we are following the winds of a different spirit.

Tending to the grass and roots and weeds with a bunch of Friends on a humid summer day is our ecumenical work, the fertile soil that sprouts missional plants. It's not glamorous. Dirty nails and sweat-soaked shirts are what we have to show for our work. This is not spectacular, like a visit with the pope at the Vatican. Pulling weeds and trimming trees is far too ordinary and unremarkable.

But it's radical—in the traditional sense. "Radical" comes from the Latin word *radix* that literally means "roots." (Think about the earthy vegetable named "radish.") "Radical" is an invitation to look at what happens on the ground amidst the roots. Thus ecumenism, of the radical variety, takes place where roots grow—where people of different local churches get together and tend to worship spaces and gardens, and all sorts of other local, grass roots (radical) moments of fellowship and friendship.

If we are to hope for any lasting ecumenical witness, then we have to get our hands dirty. Slogans and strategies shouldn't distract us from messy work. We have to tend to the roots—where we live, where we call home, our local neighborhoods and cities. What takes place among denominational leadership, at the spectacular heights of the leaves and branches, means nothing without those of us who tend to the roots—the everyday messiness of relationships across ecclesial boundaries.

Radical ecumenism has to do with where we walk and live, where we gather and with whom we read our bibles. It's about the places where we can dig in the dirt and those people who share the same dirt under their fingernails. Radical ecumenism is about how we cultivate friendships that provide space for our mission to proclaim God's love. And our ecumenical hope, if we want to take Lesslie Newbigin seriously, looks like moments of organic unity among local communities discovering the movement of the Holy Spirit as we share from the overflow of God's love.

No plot of earth is the same. Soil cultures vary from place to place. Similarly, our churches are planted in various contexts across the land. And each church must discern what kind of ecumenical organisms can grow in the land where God has planted them.

Our Mennonite church in Chapel Hill, Durham, N.C., receives its organic unity with the Friends from necessity—we don't own a building, so we have to rent space. But this necessity is an unexpected gift, the gift of relationships across denominational lines. Our separate fellowships send out roots toward one another, even if it's only one hidden root at a time.

Our radical ecumenism is only one version among a multitude of others. Creative examples abound. In Chapel Hill, churches participate in a pulpit exchange one weekend a year where each congregation sends their pastor to preach at another church, while receiving the Word from a neighboring pastor. In Durham, Pastor Spencer Bradford cancelled the regularly scheduled Sunday service at Durham Mennonite Church and led the congregation to Mt. Calvary Church (UCC) for worship. In another neighborhood, churches started a communal garden where people have a chance to nourish unexpected friendships while providing food for families.

These are a few examples that witness to the various possibilities for local ecumenical movements. If ecumenism is to be truly radical, then it's not something that distant leaders can create in the branches and leaves. Rather, this kind of rooted ecumenism emerges from the local soils where our churches grow. Congregations test their soils and decide how and where to sow ecumenical seeds that produce plants bearing fruit of the Spirit for all the neighbors to enjoy. That's when we find that our ecumenical church is also our missional church—one embracing movement of God's love.

Isaac S. Villegas is the pastor of the Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship in Durham, N.C.

Our ecumenical relationship is rooted in local intimacies: We share the same sacred space that is at the heart of our different lives of faith.

At my wife's urging, I joined a choral ensemble. I did not join because I have any singing talent—quite the opposite. I joined because I thought I might be able to improve myself without being too big of an anchor tied around the necks of the other choir members. Or at least my wife thought so. I was not convinced.

My ensemble experience

by Dan Schreiber

Throughout my life I have been an atrocious singer and an even worse musician. I like to blame this on my Catholic upbringing, because it allows me to share in community with my fellow vocally-challenged, ex-Catholic Mennonites. After 18 years of living with my music-major wife, she has only been able to patch over some of my most glaring deficiencies. I no longer mistake the rhythm of the melody for the beat and am now aware that picking any handy, semi-matching note is not how to sing a four-part harmony. In exchange for these wondrous gifts, my wife is now able (after 18 long years) to hit, catch and throw a softball.

My two doomed attempts at playing instruments (piano and cello) have left me a kindergarten-like ability to "read" music. While others around me translate in real-time the circles and squigglies on a page into actual music, my reading ability is limited to noticing that the next note will be higher or lower than the previous one. By how much is a complete mystery, and generally it is an accident when the sounds I produce resemble the pitch, tempo or volume of what is written.

In the midst of this functional musical illiteracy,

What kept me coming back were those transcendent moments at the end of a movement where everyone sings at their peak capacity.

choir also requires me to look up every so often at the director to receive arm movement instructions. I can roughly understand the intent, even though I am mostly unable to comply while I struggle not to lose my place and also continue desperately to try to match pitch. There are also a lot of verbal instructions that are literally in foreign languages, like "mezzo-forte" and "adagio," plus secret-coded English phrases, like "articulation of rhythms." The other choir members nod in agreement and make appropriate notes in their music. I also nod intently and use the time to mark little arrows next to what I hope is the tenor line, so I don't lose my place from page to page.

But there is still more. I am asked to sing louder here or softer there or lightly or with enunciation while being crescendo-y and once, even "sneeringly." Breathe here, but not with your chest and root yourself to the ground and round your Os and pronounce that hard G. There are apparently notations for each of these as well as everyone continues to scribble in their music. I wait patiently, since I've already finished marking the tenor line, the only marking I've found to have meaning.

My job in the choir, as I have defined it, is to surround myself with as many tenors as I can and attempt to amplify whatever it is they are doing. So, my singing often resembles an annoying person trying to mimic a storyteller in real-time. This role became evident in our spring performance. We apparently started one of the movements out of sync with each other—so much so that the organist simply stopped playing for a page or two until we got back in sync, which we eventually did. I say apparently, because I didn't notice. I was standing between two outstanding tenors, and they were in agreement as to which notes we were supposed to be singing, so I just followed happily along. Ignorance is bliss, indeed.

I've been trying to come up with a metaphor that describes my contribution to the ensemble. My standard image for failing at something is that of the slow gazelle being eyed by a hungry lion as the herd passes. But that doesn't quite work here since it isn't clear who is the lion. It would need to be the Slow Gazelle of Skill being run down by the Hungry Lion of Humiliation. Perhaps wildebeest would be more appropriate than gazelle in this context.

I'm the weak link in the chain. The faint black line drawn across a fine painting. The trivia partner who knows only what all his teammates already know, but is slower to answer.

But it's all OK. Too much of my life is spent avoiding situations that might reveal my weaknesses. My self-identity requires that I always be the one who is competent and talented. I want to be one who provides grace and mercy to others when they mess up instead of needing it myself. Choir is the exact opposite of this and an opportunity to put myself on the other side and be vulnerable for one hour per week. I know I need help and must trust others to provide it. And provide it they do. These are Mennonites, after all.

For just a moment, we are all connected … and have somehow become the collective embodiment of God for which our spirits yearn.

You can randomly pluck 20 Mennonites out of any potluck and you'll have enough vocal ability to match the choir of any Catholic church I've attended. Plus, they love nothing more than to provide grace and mercy to others. Especially the slow gazelles.

This ensemble (and its infinitely patient director) was particularly strong, and easily able to accommodate an outlier like myself. But if it was all just confusion and compassion, I'm not sure I would have survived.

What kept me coming back were those transcendent moments at the end of a movement where everyone sings at their peak capacity—full throated and without inhibition. When they do, the sound is so strong and so powerful that my music sheet literally vibrates in my hand, and I feel it deeply within my chest and body and soul. It is here, and only here, that I am finally able to let go. The note is mercifully long enough that I am able to confidently find the right pitch. After withholding my voice for so long for fear of messing up, I can just let it rip, and sing as long and as strong as my voice will allow, joining with the rushing tide.

We reach a destination for which I can take no credit in achieving, and yet it gives me a profound appreciation for the gifts and talents of others in taking me there. There is a surrender of self in simply putting my elbows out and being carried away by a rushing crowd of those who are stronger, faster and greater.

Finally, in these moments, I am fully a part of something greater, not only than me, but greater even than the sum of all of us in the ensemble. Our voices resonate together and fill the space between us. For just a moment, we are all connected—from the director to the ensemble to the audience—and have somehow become the collective embodiment of God for which our spirits yearn. And it is good.

Dan Schreiber is a member of First Mennonite of Urbana-Champaign, Ill. His ensemble experience was at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

All stakeholders should be at the table

Bill Hochstetler chairs the Mennonite Mission Network board of directors.

The Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA met in San Antonio Feb. 8-9 and passed a resolution calling for a unified churchwide communication and identity system, a simple and coherent funding system and one board of directors for the denomination that would replace the individual boards for each agency. Those agencies are Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite Publishing Network and Mennonite Mutual Aid. The proposal also would eliminate the board of *The Mennonite*.

There are several goals in this proposal that I support. I affirm the desire to improve the ability of churchwide ministries to function effectively, to relate to each other and to support area conferences and congregations as they seek to join God's work in the world. I also affirm the need to support area conferences and congregations as they seek to join God's work in the world.

However, the proposal left me with a number of questions:

- What are the implications for our ability as a church to do mission?
- Can one board be sufficiently knowledgeable about publishing, mission, health/stewardship and education?
- What other denominations have tried this organizational model and what were the results?
- What is it about the current structure and the relationships among church agencies that we need to improve?
- What are the details of the proposal?
- How many people in the church are calling for these changes?

Have I had an opportunity to ask these questions? Yes. I was at the meeting when the restructuring plan was announced. More recently, I participated with the other Mission Network board members in preparing 20 questions for the leaders of the Executive Board and Executive staff, and in listening to their responses. Were all the questions answered to my satisfaction? No. I was hoping for more details, but we'll stay in dialogue.

What do I as a "person-in-the-pew" need to know about our church's structure? Not much, really. I am more interested in the vision that motivates our agencies and the results they produce. For example, Mennonite Mission Network "exists to lead, mobilize and equip the church to participate in holistic witness to Jesus Christ in a broken world." We envision every congregation and all parts of the church being fully engaged in mission—across the street, all through the marketplaces and around the world.

Last year Mission Network helped connect 189 North American workers with partner agencies and congregations in 40 countries around the world and helped place 2,976 people in short-term programs both in the United States and other countries.

I also need to know that my checks in support of mission work are used for missions. That's why we have a Mission Network board—to provide overall vision and require accountability for how funds are spent.

I affirm the Executive Board's desire to improve the interaction among its agencies. There has been much collaboration among the agencies in the past six years, and even more is possible and desired. The board of Mennonite Mission Network supports changes that make Mission Network a more faithful, efficient and effective servant of Mennonite Church USA. If there are duplications and inefficiencies among the agencies, our board welcomes the opportunity to be part of a process that examines how we can all better serve congregations and conferences in our role as the denominational mission agency.

That process will take time and collaboration. Let's have a conversation in which those who love this church and care about its future discern together the changes that would serve to strengthen our capacity to be a people of healing and hope in the world.

I believe that brothers and sisters in Christ can best give and receive counsel if all stakeholders are represented at the table when restructuring decisions are considered. TM

> I also need to know that my checks in support of mission work are used for missions.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Into the light**—Emma Adams
- **Rest for the soul**—Mel Thomas

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

The sermons heard 'round the world

At least 10 Mennonite churches offer audio files of their sermons online.

Listening to a sermon anywhere, anytime is possible. At least 10 Mennonite churches use iTunes™, podcasting and sermon.net to offer audio files of their sermons. A podcast is an audio file distributed over the Internet that can be played back on computers and portable media players, like an iPod or other mp3 player.

Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church, West End Mennonite Fellowship and East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church (ECSMC), both in Lancaster, Pa., are among Mennonite churches that use SermonNet to publish their sermons on the Web that are downloadable to iTunes™.

Larry Zook, of East Chestnut Street, says he is enthused about putting sermons online because he remembers the two years he spent with his family in China and how meaningful it was to listen to audio cassettes of the church services mailed from East Chestnut Street.

"With sermons being online it is much easier for [people] living in other areas to keep in touch," he says. "It's a small world these days."

Zook lists people that the online sermons could benefit:

- missionaries and service workers serving around the world,
- older members not able to attend services who can access the Internet,
- current members who are traveling,
- former members who have moved out of the area and value keeping in touch,
- current members who were present Sunday morning and would like to hear a sermon again because it was especially meaningful,
- current members who would like to share the sermon with a friend,
- current members who wish to invite someone to church and get a feel for the pastors,
- visitors who are considering joining the church,
- family members of ECSMC members.

East Chestnut Street started using SermonNet in April. So far they have an average of 25 listens per sermon.

Visitors to www.sermon.net can access and listen to the sermons in several ways: subscribe to podcasts via Apple iTunes™, an mp3 download that can be recorded to a CD or played on other portable audio players or by listening directly from the site. The sermon downloads are also available for mobile devices such as cell phones or PDAs with Internet connection.

College Mennonite Church (CMC), Goshen, Ind., streams video live from worship services and other special events and archives them on the site for one year. Pastor Willie Kanagy says they hope to start podcasting in May. He says the other pastors and elders have wondered how video streaming affects church attendance. But the question remains unanswered, and they have not found a way to measure it.

With sermons being online it is much easier for [people] living in other areas to keep in touch.—Larry Zook

Kanagy says he does know the benefit: The videos from CMC reach people across the country and world according to phone calls and emails CMC receives.

The video is also streamed live every Sunday morning to Greencroft Retirement Community in Goshen.

"That probably affects our attendance more than anything else," Kanagy says, "especially on a cold winter Sunday morning."—*Anna Groff*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Ask these questions first:

1. Is a digital recording already being made to CD or a digital audio recorder? That is the first step.
2. Will the entire church service be online, or just sermons?
3. What online service, if any, will be used to make the sermons or audio copies of the services online? Options include www.sermon.net, www.podbean.com. Or a church could host podcasts on its Web site though additional expertise is necessary to make the sermons available in formats such as on iTunes™.
4. Who will upload the service or sermon each week to the Internet, and who will provide backup?—*Larry Zook*

Who offers podcasts?

Trinity Mennonite, Glendale, Ariz.

Mennonite Central Committee

CrossWay Church, Ocean City, Md.

New Covenant Mennonite Fellowship, Austin, Texas

Plainview Mennonite, Hutchinson, Kan.

Point-Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, Vancouver, B.C.

Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Burr Oak, Mich.

Mennonite Economic Development Associates

Metamora (Ill.) Mennonite

Park View Mennonite, Harrisonburg, Va.

Steel City Mennonite, Bethlehem, Pa.

Waterford Mennonite, Goshen, Ind.

Mennonite colleges, universities lead in 'legacy' students and alumni loyalty

This spring at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., 280 undergraduates out of an enrollment of about 900 were "legacy" students.

That means at least 31 percent of EMU's students come from families where at least one parent is an alumnus of the university.

Other Mennonite colleges also show strong alumni loyalty. Over the last three years, Goshen (Ind.) College has averaged 36 percent alumni children in its first-year classes. At Bethel College, in North Newton, Kan., 30 percent of its freshman class in the fall of 2007 were the sons and daughters of alumni. Hesston (Kan.) College averaged 25 percent over the last two years.*

"This is a highly unusual percentage of legacy students," says George Dehne, president of GDA Integrated Services, a South Carolina firm that does market research for more than 300 educational institutions across the nation.

"The greatest symbol of confidence in a college is the willingness of its alumni to entrust their children to it," Dehne says.

Such "entrusting" is understandable if the college is Ivy League or otherwise considered prestigious—such as those in the top ranks of the *Princeton Review*. In such cases, children of alumni are able to "play the legacy card" to gain an advantage in a highly competitive admission process.

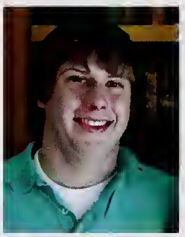
"At U.Va., the legacy preference is seen as one way to encourage alumni to keep on making the donations that help keep tuition down," reported the Associated Press in a March 2003 article posted at www.cnn.com/2003/education. "Today, sons and daughters of alumni make up more than 10 percent of students at Harvard, Yale and Princeton. They are 23 percent of the student population at Notre Dame. At the University of Virginia, 11 percent of this year's freshmen class were children of alumni."

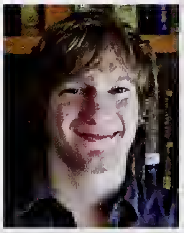
The greatest symbol of confidence in a college is the willingness of its alumni to entrust their children to it.—George Dehne

In contrast to these "elite" schools, the EMU admissions department gives no preference to children of alumni, according to Stephanie Shaffer, undergraduate admissions director. Most "legacies" arrive at EMU with great grades and strong test scores, she says.

Large numbers of alumni—more than 1,000 in the last decade—appear to be encouraging their children to attend EMU because they love the school and what it stands for.

David Troyer, a 1987 EMU graduate living in Walnut Creek, Ohio, says, "When you experience something that truly moves you and you are certain it has changed your life for the better, you naturally want your children to have the same opportunity."


Derrick Troyer


Nick Troyer

David's son, senior Derrick Troyer, agrees. "My parents were a big influence. They really pushed me to go to a Mennonite school just because of their prior experiences at EMU. They were always talking about how you make lifelong friends at EMU. You can have one-on-one relationships with teachers. You are not just a number."

Derrick told his parents he would try it out—"I thought it would be possible for me to transfer to another school"—but he not only stayed, he was joined by his younger brother Nick after his second year here.

Derrick and Nick come from a family that operates successful businesses in Ohio and Florida, including restaurants, a hotel and a retirement community. Troyer's wife, Anna, graduated from EMU's nursing program in 1999 as an adult student.

"Anna and I wanted a college experience for our sons that was Christ-centered in an atmosphere that encourages the exploration and deepening of their faith," David says. "We also wanted them to have the opportunity to make lifetime friends and form connections to the broader world through the global village requirements."

David himself is the son of an EMU alumnus. His father, Levi, earned a two-year associate degree in 1967.

"It's a wonderful location and a wonderful place to study," Levi said in a phone interview from his Florida home. "I made friends for a lifetime there."

The Troyer boys have decided they like carrying on the family tradition of coming to EMU and having experiences to share, not only with their parents and grandparents, but with cousins, aunts and uncles. Says Nick: "My dad had Ron Stoltzfus [a business professor], and so have I."

Derrick says, "Jay Landis [recently retired English professor] taught my great-aunt Mary. He remembered and talked to me about her!"

Over the last three years, Goshen (Ind.) College has averaged 36 percent of its first-year students with at least one parent who was a Goshen alumnus.

Candi Sauder King, '96, and John P. Sauder, '04, are the fourth generation in their family linked to EMU, beginning with their great-grandfather, Abram G. Heishman. He was one of five men who taught the first 40 students to enroll in a "special Bible term" at Eastern Mennonite in 1916. Next came their grandmother, Theda Shetter Heishman '39, then their father John D. and mother Bonita Heishman Sauder, both class of 1972. The family is rooted in Lancaster, Pa., where John D., Bonita, Candi and John P. work together in the family business, John D. Sauder Auto Company.

Phil Wenger, '82, owner of a chain of 20 Isaac's Restaurants in Pennsylvania, is the grandson of the second president of EMU, son of two alumni, and one of seven siblings who came to school there.

Last April, the *Daily News-Record* newspaper in Harrisonburg, Va., featured relatives and descendants of Barbara Risser, who came to Eastern Mennonite in 1949. She must have enjoyed her experience and passed the word, because 21 members of the Risser clan have since attended EMU.

For their retirement years, Barbara and her husband Ben relocated not long ago from Pennsylvania to a house near EMU to keep in closer touch with the comings and goings of the second and third generation of Rissers at EMU.

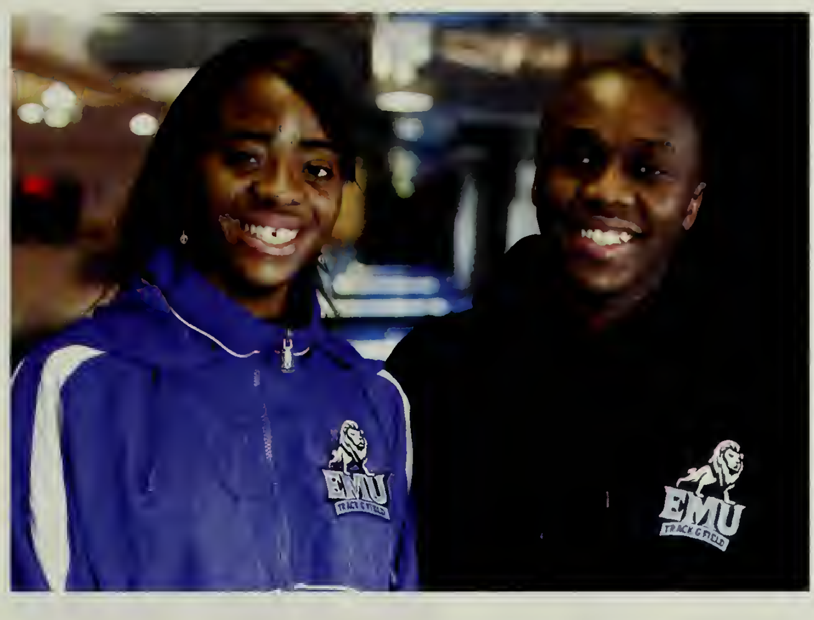
"Graduations, concerts, theater performances—we're eating it up because it won't last long." Barbara told the *News-Record* reporter. Well, that is, until the fourth generation of Rissers starts flooding in.

As EMU becomes more diverse, foreign nationals who have graduated from there are beginning to send their children back to their alma mater. Freshman Samfee Doe (see photo at right) is the daughter of Sam Gbaydee Doe, a 1998 graduate from EMU's then-new master's program in conflict transformation. He is now working for the United Nations in Sri Lanka.

Richard Bikko, class of 2011, is the son of Doreen Ruto, a 2006 graduate of EMU's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding. Richard attended Harrisonburg (Va.) High School while Doreen was pursuing her master's degree. When she returned to their home in Kenya, she encouraged Richard to enroll in EMU.

"She said it was close to my faith—a good community for me to live in—and it had a good track program," says Richard.

Two years ago, the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) surveyed 270,000 freshmen at 393 colleges.


Jim Bishop

Samfee Doe and Richard Bikko, both class of 2011, are children of graduates of EMU's MA in conflict transformation program.

EMU and sister schools Goshen, Bethel and Hesston are together in a class by themselves when it comes to legacy students: CIRP found that 33 percent of EMU's incoming first-year students in 2006 were from families where at least one parent attended EMU.

By comparison, 8.8 percent of freshmen at four-year colleges nationwide were attending the alma mater of a parent, according to CIRP. At four-year religious colleges, the percentage of children of alumni was slightly higher, 9.1 percent.

CIRP assured each participating institution of the confidentiality of the information provided in the survey. As a result, CIRP only issued composite statistics, such as the percentages given above for all four-year colleges.

EMU and sister schools Goshen, Bethel and Hesston are together in a class by themselves when it comes to legacy students.

The three Baptist (or historically Baptist) colleges that replied to a query from this writer—Wingate College and Wake Forest University in North Carolina and Linfield College in Oregon—averaged 9 percent alumni children in their freshmen classes.

Of the three Catholic institutions that replied to queries—Notre Dame in Indiana, Duquesne in Pennsylvania and Aquinas in Michigan—only Notre Dame had a legacy rate comparable to the Mennonite colleges.—*Bonnie Price Lofton of Eastern Mennonite University*

* Bluffton (Ohio) University declined to participate in this study.

Quilting needles 'powerful as hammers'

Housewarming project provides wall hangings for new owners of MDS homes.

Courtesy photo

Elaine Good holds a quilted wall hanging to be given as a gift through Mennonite Women USA's Sister Link program.

"Hammers ring hope" in Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) building projects. And since 2005, needles also ring hope as quilters stitch healing into those same storm-ripped lives through Housewarming, a Sister Link Project of Mennonite Women USA (MW USA).

The project, begun in November 2004, connects quilters from across Mennonite Church USA with homeowners who are served at MDS sites. So far, 92 quilted wall hangings have been given as gifts for homeowners of new or rebuilt homes.

"Quilters can contribute to a recovery process when they can't go out and pick up a hammer and work on a project directly," says Saundra Gale, a former MDS volunteer at project sites in California and Louisiana who helped give wall hangings to homeowners.

Gale continues, "A needle is just as powerful as a hammer. I see the looks of joy and gratitude on clients' faces during the dedication when the wall hangings are given."

MW USA board president Rebecca Sommers first envisioned this Sister Link after learning from MDS that many of the homeowners are single mothers. She felt this extra touch would be important to women.

After Rebecca shared this information with Elaine Good, MW USA president 2001-2005, Good volunteered to coordinate the effort.

Good's job is to be a bridge between the quilters and the MDS site coordinators. To begin, letters were sent to MW groups, inviting quilters to make wall hangings. The letter included instructions and dimensions for the hangings. Response was immediate and generous.

After a wall hanging is done, Good contacts MDS site coordinators to learn where the wall hanging is needed. She then gives the quilter mailing instructions. Work in the Gulf region is ongoing with sites in Pass Christian, Miss.; Diamond, La.; New Orleans, La.; and Mobile, Ala.; among others. For more information, go to www.mds.mennonite.net.

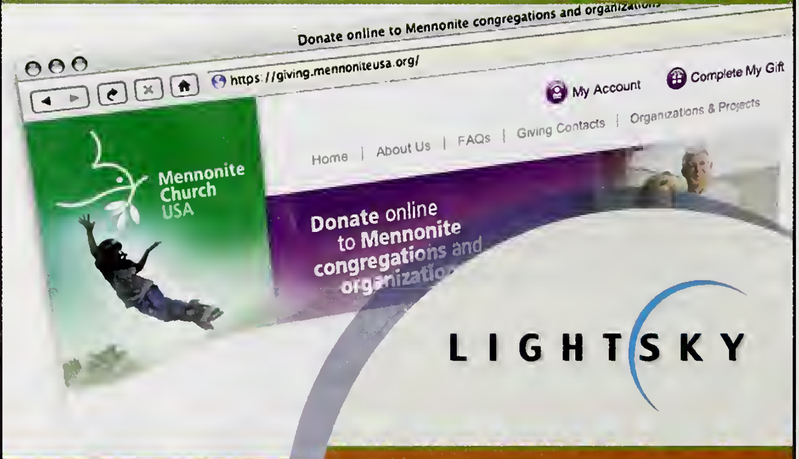
Good's work includes administration, but it also provides an opportunity to hear touching stories. She is often told about tears of gratitude at home dedications. Families are given a Bible, the book *The Hammer Rings Hope*, a quilted wall hanging and keys to their new house.

Good has created a photo album of donors and recipients.

A recipient in Julian, Calif., who received one of the first wall hangings, said, "In the weeks and months to come, we will do our best in our own way to give back to someone else what you so selflessly gave to us."

"This circle of giving and receiving are what Sister Link projects are meant to achieve," says Rhoda Keener, MW USA's executive director. Housewarming is one of many Sister Links sponsored by MW USA.

In August 2008, Good will hand over the coordinator job to Eloise Yoder, Archbold, Ohio, and Sarasota, Fla. Yoder, an avid quilter, has contributed wall hangings to this Sister Link since 2005.—*Laurie Oswald Robinson for Mennonite Church USA*


Donate online to Mennonite congregations and organizations
https://giving.mennoniteusa.org/
My Account
Complete My Gift
Home | About Us | FAQs | Giving Contacts | Organizations & Projects
Mennonite Church USA
Donate online to Mennonite congregations and organizations

Specializing in web development and customized software

LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

New fund helps with Gulf coast recovery

Mennonite Mutual Aid sponsors new interfaith initiative, The Isaiah Funds.

On May 15 an interfaith partnership launched The Isaiah Funds to aid in the long-term rebuilding efforts in low-income communities in the Gulf Coast region.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is one of six partner institutions who created the investment funds to provide low-cost capital to revitalize the economies of these communities affected by disasters. The funds will initially focus on post-Katrina/Rita hurricane recovery efforts.

The other key collaborators include the American Baptist Home Mission Society, CHRISTUS Health, Highland Good Steward Management, Jesuits of the New Orleans Province and Jewish Funds for Justice.

"Economic redevelopment is a vital, and often overlooked, second stage to disaster recovery," said Mark Regier, MMA's stewardship investing services manager.

MMA Community Development Investments (MMA CDI) plans to invest up to $500,000 in the funds by 2009, with additional investments to be considered later.

The Isaiah Funds are designed for institutional investors. Individual investors in the MMA Praxis Mutual Funds will participate in the Isaiah Funds through the mutual funds' 1 percent commitment to community development investing made through MMA CDI. Individuals can also support the Isaiah Funds' work by donating to MMA CDI's Deka Fund.

Other partners in the Isaiah Funds include: American Baptist Home Mission Society, CHRISTUS Health, Highland Good Steward Management, Jesuits of the New Orleans Province and the Jewish Funds for Justice.

Today, The Isaiah Funds announced its first set of loans and deposits. Though much of the Gulf Coast has regained the appearance of normalcy, some of the hardest rebuilding work still lies ahead.

The Isaiah Funds demonstrate that the faith community, which was among the first to respond to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, is continuing to expand its commitment to the region.

To reestablish themselves after natural and man-made disasters, low-income communities rely on patient, low-cost capital.

Faith-based institutional investors, guided by their values, are well-situated to provide this capital. The Isaiah Funds will make it easier for faith investors to support disaster recovery.

By early 2009, The Isaiah Funds will make $4.5 million in loans and grants to nonprofit organizations and community development financial institutions in the Gulf Coast, supporting affordable housing, small business development and the construction of community facilities.

Regier was part of the Katrina Investment Response Team that led efforts to create a way to provide funds to needy communities along the Gulf Coast.

Economic redevelopment is a vital, and often overlooked, second stage to disaster recovery.—Mark Regier

This team grew out of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, an organization dedicated to leading the corporate social responsibility movement.

"Combining their knowledge," said Regier, "with our 'impassioned dollars,' we can bring healing and wholeness back to the affected communities in the Gulf Coast and in regions that may be affected by disasters in the future."—*MMA*

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2008 TOURS

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND and WALES (June 25-July 7)
EXPLORING SWISS-GERMAN FAMILY ROOTS in EUROPE - EUROPEAN HERITAGE (August 25-September 7)
BUS TOUR to PENNSYLVANIA - SIGHT & SOUND (September 25-28)
CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)
TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)
FOLLOWING the STEPS of MOSES (November 2-14)
MWC GLOBAL CHURCH TOUR with LARRY & ELEANOR MILLER (November 10-24)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-19)
MWC #1 - BRAZIL, IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY (July 2-20)
MWC #2 - CHILE, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY (July 5-20)
MWC #3 - IGUAZU FALLS and PARAGUAY (July 9-20)
MWC #4 - IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY, PERU (July 10-24)
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and BOLIVIA (July 12-25)
MWC #6 - IGUAZU FALLS, PARAGUAY, PERU (July 12-29)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (August 1-15)
MENNONITE STORY in POLAND (September 15-23)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (Oct. 24-Nov. 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (Jan. 3-13)
CHURCHES AND SAFARIS in KENYA and TANZANIA (February 9-20)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE TOUR (June 4-17)

2010 TOURS

CHECK WEB SITE FOR TOURS INCLUDING OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

TOURMAGINATION
DISCOVERY & FELLOWSHIP

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

MC USA churches buy some new wheels

Congolese church gets $20,000 from Mennonite congregations for motorbikes.

When Benjamin Mubenga of Congo couldn't get a visa to visit the United States, the North Waterloo (Ontario) Mennonite Church provided space for leaders from the United States to meet him there. From left: Ron Byler, Mubenga, Rod Hollinger-Janzen and Steve Wiebe-Johnson

Ray Brubacher

When the United States government recently refused to give a visa for Rev. Benjamin Mubenga to visit the United States, Mennonite Church USA leaders decided to go to him instead. Mubenga, president of the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Congo (CEM), was in Canada to meet with Mennonite Church Canada pastors and congregations.

On May 8 at Waterloo (Ontario) North Mennonite Church, Ron Byler, associate executive director for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, presented Mubenga with a check for $20,000 from Mennonite Church USA congregations and members to help purchase motorbikes for church leaders. Byler said the check represented the desire of people in the United States to walk alongside sister congregations in Congo.

He said this financial gift was only one of many ways people in Mennonite Church USA want to share gifts with their sisters and brothers in Congo. Church leaders from Congo and U.S. are hopeful Congolese Mennonites will be able to continue sharing gifts of worship and music next summer. Byler said plans are in process for Mennonite Church USA to host a Congo music group during and after the Mennonite Church USA Convention 2009 in Columbus, Ohio.

Steve Wiebe-Johnson, director for Africa for Mennonite Mission Network, and Rod Hollinger-Janzen, executive coordinator for Africa Inter-Mennonite Missions, accompanied Byler to Ontario. AIMM and the Mission Network, already work in partnership with others with Congo church leaders.

In February 2007, when a Mennonite Church USA delegation visited Congo, Mubenga said one of the church's greatest needs was a way for church leaders to get to the people. The delegation experienced first-hand the serious deterioration of the road system in the country.

"We need to be able to get to the people," Mubenga said. "Our churches have the potential to be self-sufficient and reach out to people in other areas. The problem is getting there."

Motorbikes offer a practical solution to this dilemma, he said.

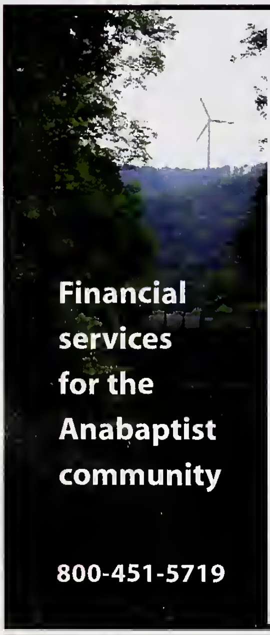
Mubenga said additional priorities for Congo churches are scholarships for young people to attend university, training for church planters and counsel for resolving disputed ownership of church properties.—*Mennonite Church USA staff*

"At EMS we spent time looking at biblical texts. Studying the context of the Scriptures unlocked fascinating and delightful discoveries in stories we often take at face value."

Rachel S. Gerber
'05 seminary graduate (MDiv)

EASTERN MENNONITE SEMINARY
A Graduate Division of Eastern Mennonite University

1200 Park Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
1-800-710-7871
seminary@emu.edu
emu.edu/seminary



Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Congregation-secured loans

In cases of extreme financial need—or when a member does not meet regular borrowing requirements—we may set up a loan program with accountability to the members' local congregation.

***Congregation-secured loans:** One more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Goshen mourns Chengdu earthquake

Study-Service Term group still scheduled to go to Nanchong in late August.

Goshen (Ind.) College is mourning the loss of life and devastation from China's worst earthquake in three decades. The college has sent students to a university in Chengdu, China, for 25 years as part of its Study-Service Term program and was the first U.S. college to arrange an undergraduate exchange with the People's Republic of China in 1980.

Since a magnitude-7.9 earthquake hit the Sichuan Province, of which Chengdu is the capital city, on May 12, Tom Meyers, director of international education has been reaching out to friends the college has made in the area.

"We were very saddened by the news of the terrible earthquake, the lives lost and the damage to this country we have such a strong connection with," says Meyers.

Meyers received notice from Yang Tianqing, the assistant director of the foreign affairs office at Sichuan Normal University, that all teachers and students are safe at the university, where Goshen sent students. Tianqing wrote, "The building where you stayed shook wildly. We all rushed out of the building. Yesterday evening many faculty and students stayed outside."

When the earthquake occurred, Wilbur Birky, director emeritus of international education, was in Chengdu, but is safe.

There have been 158 Chinese scholars from the Sichuan Province who have studied at Goshen College as part of an educational exchange with Sichuan Provincial Education Commission. Meyers has not heard the status of all of them yet.

Meyers is also assessing what impact the earthquake disaster may have on the college's Study-Service Term (SST) program in China, as a group of students is scheduled to go in late August. The students are planning to be located in Nanchong at China West Normal University, which is located in eastern Sichuan Province.

"We have heard that all is well there," he says.

Sixteen students, a faculty member and a staff person from Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., are safe in China following the devastating May 12 earthquake there. Their travel and study plans are being modified, but the group will complete their scheduled term.—*Goshen College*

TMail
TMail

Mennonite Mondays:

Start every week with updates on the latest Mennonite happenings. Sign up for ***TMail***—the free, weekly ezine with Web-exclusive stories and blog updates as well as breaking news.

To sign up, visit
www.themennonite.org

Or send your request to
TMail@themennonite.org
providing your email address.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

**•1700 S. Main St.,
Goshen, IN
46526-4794**

CALENDAR

Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb., will celebrate its ***50th anniversary*** June 7-8. Call 402-761-2709 or email bell606@alltel.net for details.

This year's annual ***Bridgefolk summer conference*** will take place July 24-27 at **Saint John's Abby in Collegeville, Minn.** Under the theme "Holiness the Road: Saints and the Spirituality that Sustains them," the meeting will foster discussion on understandings of holiness and sanctity in the Catholic and Mennonite traditions. Registration for the event is now open on the Bridgefolk Web site: www.bridgefolk.net.

WORKERS

Boyer, H. Wesley, retired as pastor of Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City, Pa., on Feb. 28. Wes and his wife, Lois, will soon begin training through MCC for mission work in Kenya, Africa, in January 2009.

Leichty, Virginia, was licensed as associate pastor at Burr Oak Mennonite Church, Rensselaer, Ind.

Marchand, James, was licensed as evangelist and itinerant minister at Burr Oak Mennonite Church, Rensselaer, Ind., on May 11.

Moyer, Timothy, begins a term as pastor at Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City, Pa., on June 22.

Nafziger, Tim, started as outreach coordinator for Christian Peacemaker Teams on April 7 in Chicago, Ill.

Voss, Debbie, was licensed as youth pastor at Burr Oak Mennonite Church, Rensselaer, Ind., on May 11.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bontrager, Noah Joseph, March 18, to Lyle and Erin Bontrager Bontrager, LaGrange, Ind.

Coble, Zachary Glenn and Gabriel Allen (twins), April 7, to Kris and Christine Richer Coble, Columbus, Ohio.

Diener, Daphne Almeda, April 4, to Daniel and Lynn Eastman Diener, Goshen, Ind.

Edris, Sadie Lynn, May 4, to Justin and Jennifer Morey Edris, Weyers Cave, Va.

Good, Elijah Orion, May 7, to Tim and Amy Good, Weyers Cave, Va,

Hickman, Makayla Elizabeth, born Sept. 11, 2006. Received for adoption April 7 by Matthew and Debra Miller Hickman, Cassopolis, Mich.

High, Benjamin James, April 20, to David and Margaret Weaver High, Lancaster, Pa.

Hostetler, Abrahm Owen, April 26, to Jason and Sara Maurer Hostetler, Wooster, Ohio.

Kanagy, Madison Esther, April 27, to Kevin and Nan Beyler Kanagy, Harrisonburg, Va.

Kauffman, Brady Joel, May 2, to Joel and Andrea Leichty Kauffman, West Liberty, Ohio.

Klink, Lilly Ann, March 2, to Nate and Julia Miller Klink, Millersburg, Ohio.

Lehman, Micah David, March 28, to Nathan and Michelle Nicoletti Lehman, Boswell, Pa.

Liechty, Emma Claire, April S, to Jade and Jill Miller Liechty, Hartville, Ohio.

Martin, Emma Kathryn, March 31, to Taylor and Sarah Hastings Martin, Waterloo, Ontario.

Mast, Wade Christian, April 30, to Daryl and Karen Wenger Mast, Terre Hill, Pa.

Mauck, Eden Elaine, Feb. 11, to Nate and Kari Bontrager Mauck, LaGrange, Ind.

Thomas, Isaac Trevor, May 13, to Trevor and Kristin Stutzman Thomas, Berlin, Ohio.

Zwart, James Abel, April 24, to Jeffrey and Megan Halteman Zwart, South Bend, Ind.

MARRIAGES

Alderfer/Good: Bradley Wade Alderfer, Souderton, Pa., and Sondra Marie Good, Telford, Pa., April 26 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Allison/Hostetler: Lauren Allison, Burr Oak, Mich., and Enos Hostetler, Howe, Ind., April 4 at Marion Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind.

Diller/Hudson: Amanda Diller, Avondale, Ariz., and Brett Hudson, Reidfield, Maine, March 9 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

Fulford/Keeler: Elizabeth Fulford, Franconia, Pa., and Jason Keeler, Souderton, Pa., May 10 at Franconia Mennonite Church.

Hurst/Via: Karen Hurst, Staunton, Va., and Scott Via, Lyndhurst, Va., April 30 at Lynside Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst.

Kauffman/Sindel: Kyle Kauffman, Millersburg, Ohio, and Amanda Sindel, Millersburg, April 12 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church, Walnut Creek, Ohio.

Nisly/Patrick: Ralph Nisly, Hartville, Ohio, and Janet Patrick, North Canton, Ohio, May 5 at Myrtle Beach, S.C.

DEATHS

Alderfer, Clyde J., 60, Coopersburg, Pa., died April 12. Parents: Abram C. and Catherine Johnson Alderfer. Funeral: April 19 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Bontrager, Charlotte Miller, 74, Elkhart, Ind., died April 12 following an extended illness. Spouse: Marion Bontrager. Parents: Joni and Charlotte Kauffman Miller. Children: Jolene Lehman, Robert; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Borgendale, Rosalie Ruth Schroeder, 80, Wamego, Kan., died May 13. Spouse: Llewellyn V. Borgendale. Parents: Jacob I. and Anna M. Peters Schroeder. Children: Jerry, Kevin, Petty Vishnefske, Lou, Jr., Carol Hill; seven grandchildren. Funeral: May 17 at St. Bernard's Catholic Church, Wamego.

Buerge, Dennis, 68, Indianapolis, Ind., died May 9 of cancer. Spouse: Mildred Joann Miller Buerge. Parents: Claude and Clysta Buerge. Children: Kevin, Anissa Haywood, Karen Hanson; four grandchildren. Funeral: May 17 at Shalom Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business.

Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

timely tip:
Check your smoke alarms!

Derstine, Kermit H., 74, Denver, Colo., died March 29 of heart failure. Spouse: Sherilyn J. Derstine. Parents: Clarence F. and Mamie W. H. Derstine. Children: John Matthew, Sara Tiernan; five grandchildren. Memorial service: April 21 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Egli, Fayetta M. Flynn, 78, Peoria, Ill., died April 30. Spouse: Chris R. Egli (deceased). Parents: Thomas and Mayme Elmore Flynn. Children: Randy, Chris, Jr., Steve, Kathi Lear, Christina M. Egli; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 6 at Metamora Mennonite Church, Metamora, Ill.

Gerber, Caleb, 76, Canton, Ohio, died March 16 following an extended illness. Spouse: Joyce Bell Gerber. Parents: Wilbur and Mary Shutt Gerber. Children: Julie Lear, Mark; three grandchildren. Funeral: March 22 at Salem Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Good, Vida Lucille King, 93, Newport News, Va., died May 3. Spouse: Ezra O. Good (deceased). Parents: Ben B. and Martha Melinda King. Children: Galen, Cynthia Chitwood, Loretta Irby, Eldon, Marilyn Hansen, Wilfred; 15 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 7 at Weaver's Chapel, Knoxville, Tenn.

Huebert, John E., 62, North Lima, Ohio, died April 16. Spouse: Melva Horst Huebert. Parents: Jacob and Grace Lehman Huebert. Children: Jacob H., Mary G. Huebert. Funeral: April 20 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana, Ohio.

Jacobs, Merle E., 89, Smithville, Ohio, died April 9. Spouse: Elizabeth Beyeler Jacobs. Parents: Paul and Emma Trella Risch Jacobs. Funeral: April 12 at Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.

Landis, John S., 93, Manheim, Pa., died May 11. Spouse: Anna S. Leakway Landis. Parents: John J. and Nora S. Stauffer Landis. Children: John L., David L., Mary Ann Ogburn; seven grandchildren; three step-grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; 14 step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 15 at East Petersburg Mennonite Church, East Petersburg, Pa.

Nafziger, J. Marvin, 84, Goshen, Ind., died April 29. Spouse: Edith E. Nafziger. Parents: John M. and Anna E. Litwiller Nafziger. Children: Myra J. Oswald, Diana K. Hershberger, Susan E. Bartel, John M.; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: May 2 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

New MCC DVD
In the Name of Christ

MCC stories from around the world

Canada – relationship building
Chad – food security
Colombia – water access
Nepal – HIV/AIDS education
Sudan – relief kits
United States – creation care

Purchase at www.mccstore.org
Borrow at mcc.org/catalog
Canada (888) 622-6337
United States (888) 563-4676

In the name of CHRIST

Mennonite Central Committee

Peachey, LeRoy, 84, Belleville, Pa., died March 27. Spouse: Lois R. Hostetler Peachey. Parents: Moses and Rebecca Zook Peachey. Children: Shirley Roth, Dwight, Dean, Gayle Shank; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: March 29 at Barrville Mennonite Church, Reedsville, Pa.

Pollman, Maggie, 85, Freeman, S.D., died May 9. Parents: Andrew A. and Maggie R. Hofer Pollman. Funeral: May 13 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Shope, Marjorie E. Miller, 91, Scottdale, Pa., died April 20. Spouse: Wilson Shope (deceased). Parents: Clair and Mary Harter Miller. Children: Marjorie E. Stover, Wilma R. Ryan, Mary J. Allison, Alma G. Stoner; 14 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at Scottdale Mennonite Church.

Skinner, Charles R. Jr., 84, McPherson, Kan., died April 20 of cancer. Elaine J. Stoneback Skinner. Spouse: Marsha Price Skinner (deceased). Parents: Charles R. and Esther Jonas Skinner. Children: Myrna D. Walline, Marva J. Griffith, CharlCie "Becky" R. Estes, Charles Skinner, Lisa M. Chapman, Michael J. Stout; eight grandchildren. Funeral: April 24 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson.

Stoltzfus, Clarence, 87, New Holland, Pa., died May 8. Spouse: S. Kathryn Groff Kauffman Stoltzfus. Spouse: L. Rachel Becker Stoltzfus (deceased). Parents: Stephen and Sadie Kurtz Stoltzfus. Children: Dennis C., Rosalin D. Nolt, Cindy F. Berg; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Step-children: Carol Musser, Richard Kauffman, Donna Thompson; five step-grandchildren; 10 step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 12 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Tressler, Audrey Elaine Engle, 82, Springs, Pa., died May 1. Spouse: Elwood "Piney" Tressler. Parents: Lester and Gertrude Hersh Engle. Children: Rhonda Hershberger; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 5 at Springs Mennonite Church.

Wagner, Evelyn Effie Beach, 94, Denver, Colo., died April 5 of multiple organ failure. Spouse: Curtis Wagner (deceased). Spouse: Clyde Barber. Parents: Ralph and Addie Beach. Children: Ron Barber, Linda Wyse, Sonja; six grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Yoder, Rachel M. Miller, 71, Bronx, N.Y., died May 1 of sepsis and cellulites. Spouse: Monroe J. Yoder. Parents: Ivan J. and Della Bender Miller. Children: Naomi Yoder-Harris, Keith; one granddaughter. Funeral: May 7 at Maple Glen Mennonite Church, Grantzville, Md.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

***Worship coordinator*: Marietta Community Chapel** is seeking coordinator for music and other creative ministries. This role (eight hrs/week) includes leadership of contemporary worship team. Contact Cliff Hershey 717-285-7682 or moocrew@mindspring.com. Web site: www.mariettachapel.org.

Bethany Christian Schools (gr. 6-12; enrollment 285) invites applications for 2008-09 for the position of ***high school English teacher*** with primary responsibility for senior English courses, including AP English and a creative writing elective. Interest in theater would be an asset. Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure. To apply, submit a resumé and letter of application to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499. Phone: 574-534-2567; email: akdueck@bethanycs.net.

Hinkletown Mennonite School is seeking a ***middle school math teacher*** for the '08-'09 school year. Applicants must have bachelor's degree, preferably in math or elementary education. Contact Kathy Stoltzfus at kstoltzfus@hmsk8.org or send resumé to Hinkletown Mennonite School, 272 Wanner Road, Ephrata, PA 17522.

Penn View Christian School is seeking two enthusiastic ***full-time middle school (grades 6-8) teachers*** beginning in the 2008-09 school year: science, social studies. Penn View offers a Christ-centered, academically excellent education for 615 students in early childhood through eighth grade. Please visit our Web site at www.pennview.org for general information about the school and a professional application. Please send your resumé and completed application to Stephen Schrag, Middle School Principal, Penn View Christian School, 420 Godshall Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 215-723-1196; emails may be sent to sschrag@pennview.org.

***John H. Mosemann: A Preacher's Preacher* by Alfred Albrecht**. A biography, description of interpersonal style, sermon analysis, plus sermon texts; $14.95. 1414 Hampton Circle, Goshen, IN 46526.

Hinkletown Mennonite School, a K-8 Christian school, is seeking a ***full-time administrator/director of development*** position available July 2008. This chief executive position is responsible for the daily operations of the school as well as strategic planning and budgeting. Responsibilities include fund-raising, capital campaign, recruitment and donor relations. Supervision of teachers is provided by a full-time principal. Excellent communication and relational skills are required. A bachelor's degree in education or administration is preferred. Email resumé to boardchair@hmsk8.org or mail to: Roy Hoover, 668 South Kinzer Ave., New Holland, PA 17557; 717-354-7100.

Business opportunity: ***Thriving wood products business***, established customer base, dimensioned wood cuts, **Western Kentucky**, can be purchased as home, building, equipment and goodwill. Interested parties only phone 270-970-0138.

Flock needs shepherd: Are you a ***lead pastor*** that passionately loves God, walks in the power of the Holy Spirit and has a heart for people? If so, you may be the one we are looking and praying for. Leader, encourager, mentor, counselor and preacher are some of the hats you would be wearing while working alongside an associate pastor, a youth pastor and a body of elders. We have been a **rural Mennonite community in coastal Virginia**, but God is bringing neighborhoods to our doorstep, and we need to learn to reach out, without losing our loving and caring church family atmosphere. We are seeing the Holy Spirit at work among us. If Jesus is nudging your heart, send your resumé to mtpmc22@verizon.net.

Coming to **Montreal** for school or vacation? Support a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada project while enjoying Montreal's trendy "Plateau" district by staying at ***Maison de l'amitié Summer Guestrooms and Student residence***. Student housing available for September. 514-843-4356, www.residencema.ca, reservations@maisondelamitie.ca.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS
FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED
THE CHILDREN OF
GOD.
– MATTHEW 5:9

Goshen College's Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies program is built on decades of scholarship, a unique and nationally admired study-abroad program, a community that seeks diversity and Christ-centered core values rooted in the peace church tradition.

You might choose a major or a minor in a peace studies program, enhance another area of study wtih conflict mediation training, sign up for a semester of urban peacemaking study in Indianapolis, join the Pax or Eco-Pax student clubs and engage significant issues with guest speakers as well as your own professors and classmates.

We invite you to visit out welcoming campus to find out more – on your journey as a peacemaker.

GOSHEN
COLLEGE
WWW.GOSHEN.EDU/PEACE

Pastor needed: **Mountain Community Mennonite Church**, located in Palmer Lake, Colo., is looking for a ***full-time pastor.*** We are a small church in the Mountain States Conference located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. See our Web site at www.mcmcpl.org. For more information, please contact our conference minister: Herm Weaver at 303-258-7589.

Celebrate Fitness!

2008 Mennonite Sports and Fitness Classic

June 26-28 at Goshen College

Register now at: http://marp.mennonite.net/

Questions? 269-353-8515

Sponsored by MARP and MMA
Photo by Jeff Arbogast, *The Goshen News*

Executive Director. Menno-Hof in Shipshewana, Ind., is a vibrant Amish/Mennonite interpretive center celebrating 20 years of successful operation. Looking for an executive director to exhibit creativity and work with the board of directors to expand and refine vision for the future. Desired qualifications: strong knowledge of the Anabaptist faith tradition; ability to communicate issues of faith and culture passionately. Complete job description at www.mennohof.org. Send resumés or inquiries to Leanne Farmwald, c/o Menno-Hof, 510 S Van Buren St, Shipshewana, IN 46565 or lfarmwald@aol.com.

The **Salem Mennonite Church**, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alberta (45 minutes Southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, Alberta T0B 4J0; Fax: 780-662-0106; email salemchurch@live.ca.

The Communities of Maple Lawn in Eureka, Ill., seek a ***chief executive officer*** to lead their 320-resident/220-staff retirement community. Qualified candidates will have senior leadership experience in large organizations, strong financial knowledge, ability to develop a productive work culture consistent with organizational values, board experience and a passion for the organization's mission. Interested candidates should contact Kirk Stiffney with MHS Alliance at kirk@stiffneygroup.com or 574-537-8736.

Beth Haven community is seeking an ***administrator*** for its 101-bed skilled nursing home. Beth Haven is a Mennonite-affiliated retirement and health-care community located in Hannibal, Mo., with independent living, assisted living and a skilled nursing home on its campus. This position reports to the chief executive officer. Qualified candidates will have leadership experience in health care, financial knowledge, strong customer service and interpersonal skills, maintain a culture consistent with organizational values, a passion for the organization's mission and have or be eligible to obtain a Missouri Nursing Home Administrator's License. Interested individuals should send cover letter and resumé to chief executive officer, Beth Haven, 2500 Pleasant St. Hannibal, MO 63401; PEwert@bethaven.org.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

MAX® is wholeness

Are you feeling "warm and fuzzy" now?

Wholeness is more than fluff, it's more than a slogan and it's certainly more than what you would ever expect coming from an insurance* company who provides home, farm, church and business insurance.

From excellent claims service to special attention from MAX Mutual Aid Ministries....

WHOLENESS is the substance that keeps MAX solid.

Questions? Contact us today!
wholeness@maxwholeness.com
877-971-6300 ● www.maxwholeness.com

MAX®
Creating and Sustaining
WHOLENESS™

*Insurance products provided by MutualAid eXchange (MAX)

Doing less smudging

Michael A. King, Telford, Pa., is pastor, Spring Mount (Pa.) Mennonite Church; publisher, Cascadia Publishing House LLC; and editor, *DreamSeeker Magazine*.

We're wounded even before we take our first breath. That's because we have parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins and more. We're born into and shaped by their wounds. Then many of us have children. And pass the wounds forward.

I remember watching each of my daughters take that first breath. So tiny. So fresh. So unmarked by life. That's probably why babies can make you catch your own breath: The wounds are already upon them, but their bodies don't know it yet. I remember hoping it would be better than it was for us. Joan and I were each fortunate to be born into families no worse than most and healthier than many.

But put just our two families together, look back a few generations, and between us we had been born into emotional abandonment, suicide, mental illness, early deaths of parents or siblings, remarriage, marital struggles, doctrinal splits turning family members into near-strangers and more.

If I were writing back when my daughters were unmarked, I'd have a cheerier report. Now they're grown, and it's clear: They too were born into wounds. I'm proud of how they've navigated their markings. Yet I grieve when they must work through frailties traceable to me or way back to a great-grandparent.

So is it hopeless? Each generation wounding the next forever? Partly yes. Look back at Genesis. Adam and Eve bear Cain and Abel. Cain kills Abel. Skip to Abraham and Sarah: Amid family troubles they bear Isaac.

We're born into and shaped by our parents' wounds. Then many of us have children. And pass the wounds forward.

Thinking God wants it, Abraham almost kills Isaac; who knows how that wounds.

Next Isaac and Rebekah bear Esau and Jacob. Jacob is born grasping Esau's heel. Each twin becomes the favorite of one parent. One day, heel-grasping Jacob tricks Esau into selling his first-from-the-womb status as oldest son.

Jacob grows up. Now he wants Rachel but is tricked into first marrying Rachel's sister Leah. Next come years of ruckus as a bevy of Jacob's children sprout from wives and maids. Finally Rachel becomes pregnant with Joseph.

Eventually in this Genesis soap opera the story settles on Joseph, his father Jacob's favorite son as Jacob was his mother's. In his dreams Joseph's family bows to him. Already jealous enough of their father's favorite son, his enraged brothers sell him into slavery.

On it goes, until one day I'm born. You're born. And onto our briefly unmarked selves fall wounds going back to the beginning.

Still there are reasons for hope. I suggest three. First, by the very act of naming wounds, we can start their healing. How the healing comes will vary. For me and Joan, a godsend was therapy. Early in our marriage we realized we were struggling—with each other, ourselves, raising our first baby. The gift of a Christian therapist couple appeared. Much of what they helped us do over the next seven years was name the wounds we had inherited and to aim not simply to pass them on.

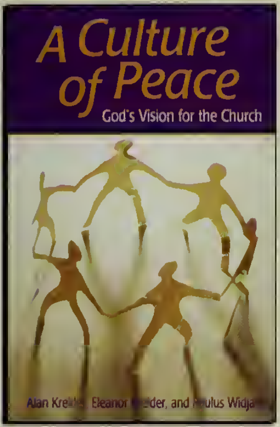
That leads to the second cause for hope: Once we name the wounds needing healing, we can work at not passing them on. That lets the next generation gain a less wounded start. I see this in my daughters. All show family markings. But all seem less smudged than their parents.

Joseph in his own way intervened in generations of wounding. After his brothers sold him, he faced many miseries. But eventually he became a leader of Egypt during a time of famine. The famine drove his family to Egypt for food. They didn't recognize magnificent Joseph, now grown. Joseph must have been tempted to keep the wounding going, to thunder down that here they were, bowing as his dreams had predicted. And for a time he did trick them and lord it over them. But then, Genesis 45:1 says, "Joseph could no longer control himself ..." and told his brothers who he was. So the brothers were reconciled: "And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him" (45:15).

Generations of rivalry and jealousy were healing. This is the kind of work we owe each other. Joseph's experience offers a third cause for hope: God can work through our wounds. Joseph can move beyond bitterness because, as he tells his brothers, God was in the journey their anger sent him on. On our own journey of dealing with wounds we will often come to see that from them God has wrested blessings.

The work is never completed and can create its own wounds, as when the move of Joseph's reconciled family to Egypt sets them up to become slaves. But it is better to only partly lighten marks than never even to care that unless we name our smudgings, we'll willy-nilly pass them on. TM

BOOKS FOR YOU—AND/OR YOUR READING GROUP


A Culture of Peace
God's Vision for the Church
Alan Kreider, Eleanor Kreider, and Paulus Widjaja

203 pages
$9.99, paperback

A Culture of Peace,

by Alan Kreider, Eleanor Kreider, and Paulus Widjaja

Why is peace such a divisive issue, even among Christians? Why is peace often considered an extra to faithful Christian living?

The authors suggest how to develop "peacemaking reflexes"; how churches "can learn to handle conflict well"; and how to cultivate vulnerability and humility, two essential "attitudes of peacemakers."

Is it insensitive to share your faith? *by James R. Krabill*

Krabill walks right into discussions often considered off limits. Are Christians hopelessly narrow and uninformed? Why do they act as though only they are right and everyone else isn't? Why would Jesus be someone to follow today? And what difference could that make?

Krabill's very readable style and honest manner make this book accessible to young adults and other critical thinkers.

Is it insensitive to share your faith?
Hard questions about Christian mission in a plural world
James R. Krabill

152 pages
$9.99, paperback

THE LITTLE BOOK OF
Cool Tools for Hot Topics
Group Tools to Facilitate Meetings When Things Are Hot
RON KRAYBILL & EVELYN WRIGHT
THE LITTLE BOOKS OF JUSTICE & PEACEBUILDING

92 pages
$4.95, paperback

The Little Book of Cool Tools for Hot Topics,

by Ron Kraybill and Evelyn Wright

Some subjects seem too hot for a group to discuss sanely. Not necessarily.

The Little Book of Cool Tools for Hot Topics shows how to help people hear each other when they feel like shouting; how to focus on the issues at stake rather than having a war of personalities; and how to move a group toward making a decision that all can honestly support.

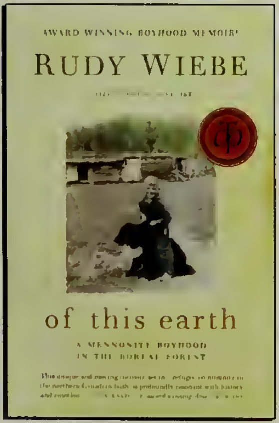
SailingActs, *by Linford Stutzman*

Seafaring isn't for the faint of heart. It wasn't for the Apostle Paul—shipwrecked, imprisoned, and often a stranger in foreign lands.

And it turned out to be a heart-stopping task some two thousand years later, when a professor and his wife undertook a 14-month journey by sailboat! It's a great adventure story. But the author also will increase your understanding and appreciation for St. Paul.

SailingActs
LINFORD STUTZMAN

330 pages
$14.95, paperback


RUDY WIEBE
of this earth
A MENNONITE BOYHOOD IN THE BOREAL FOREST

393 pages
$15.95, paperback

Of This Earth, *by Rudy Wiebe*

Of The Earth holds Rudy Wiebe's memoirs of growing up through age 12. His immigrant family cut a farm out of stony bushland in remote Saskatchewan. They hand-dug their well, climbed a ladder to their beds under the rafters, and traveled by sleigh on the frontier.

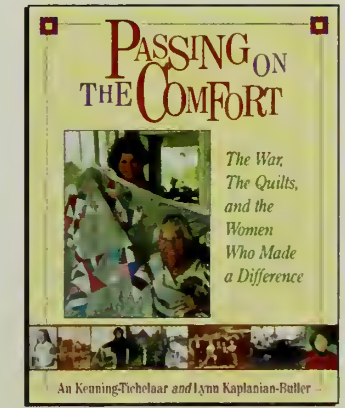
Stories and singing and food from their native Ukraine and Poland held them and filled their bodies and souls.

Passing on the Comfort,

by An Keuning-Tichelaar and Lynn Kaplanian-Buller

Two women find each other in Holland, brought together improbably by a set of worn quilts, made by groups of women half-a-world-away who simply used what they had.

This book is a patchwork of stories of women helping others, passing on the comfort.


PASSING ON THE COMFORT
The War, The Quilts, and the Women Who Made a Difference
An Keuning-Tichelaar and Lynn Kaplanian-Buller

186 pages
$14.95, paperback

Good Books®

At local bookstores or directly from the publisher.
Call toll-free **800/762-7171** • P.O. Box 419, Intercourse, PA 17534 • **www.GoodBooks.com**
Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and AmEx accepted. Shipping/Handling, add 10% ($3.00 minimum).

***********************************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 883 15-DEC-09 66994 35 32
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

What is emergent?

For some time now we have been publishing references to the emergent church—also called the emerging church. I've been wondering what it was and am still not sure anyone knows. Yet the language is creeping into our lexicon, and so maybe it would be good to describe why—and from whence it comes.

In his article, "Joining the Anabaptist Conspirators" on page 12, futurist Tom Sine identifies the "emerging" church as one of four streams.

"Essentially, those in this stream," says Sine, "are seeking to plant new expressions of church that are contextualized to engage to postmodern young."

The key phrase here is "new expressions of church." But it is not yet possible to report exactly what those "expressions" are. Nevertheless something is happening in the Protestant church in the West, and it may be a big thing. One national Christian leader who thinks so is Phyllis Tickle.

Founding editor of the religion department at *Publisher's Weekly*, Tickle is widely known as an authority on religion in America. She has written more than two dozen books on the subject; most notable are in the *Divine Hours* series, the manuals I have used for the past four years in the practice of fixed-hour prayer.

Changes can remind us that God's Spirit is not dependent on us to keep the church alive.

On April 21, Tickle addressed the Associated Church Press' annual convention in Dallas and talked about the emerging, or the emergent, church. The luncheon crowd was comprised of editors and reporters from many of the major Christian denominations in North America.

"You didn't cause emergents," Tickle said, "and you're not going to stop it. Is it perfect? No. Neither was Martin Luther."

The reference to Martin Luther and the beginning of the Protestant Reformation was intentional. Tickle believes that the Protestant church is in the middle of an upheaval as dramatic and radical as that which challenged the Roman Catholic church in the 16th century. But this time it is the Protestant church in the West—that has enjoyed "pride of place" for several hundred years—that will be supplanted. Whereas the 16th century had the Great Reformation, Tickle says we are now on the cusp of the Great Emergence.

Like most others, I wanted to know what an emergent looks like. Tickle says it is too early to tell. Further, some of the current characteristics of this phenomenon—it's not really a movement—may not last into its final form. But there are some observations to make about emergent Christians.

The most immediate observation is that emergents borrow freely from any denominational or ecclesiastical tradition. It is in the crucible of these disparate traditions that something new is being formed, and it will not look like traditional Protestantism. According to Tickle, emergents are composed of four types: liturgical, mainline, conservative and renewal (or pentecostal).

Tim Nafziger (page 13), a blogger for our Web site who also helps summarize the Young Anabaptist Radicals blogs, is in the vanguard of such a movement in our tradition.

"One clear pattern in the emerging church is a sense that being a Christian is about more than just attending church," Nafziger says. "It's about living our lives together in a way that follows the life and teachings of Jesus. For Mennonites, that can sound like a cliché, but for young people who grew up seeing the sinner's prayer as the main mark of being a Christian, that's a radical statement."

Maybe it is just another vanity on our part to think that we are in the throes of an upheaval as epic as the Protestant Reformation. Maybe not. It may be as difficult for us to see what is happening now as it was for faithful Christians in 1517 who first read Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses.

Any such changes do not mean the church is in trouble. Rather, they may reveal that God is still in control and doing a big new thing. Such changes can also remind us that God's Spirit is not dependent on us to keep the church alive.—*ejt*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

TheMennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

June 17, 2008

12 The holes I cannot fill

14 Into the light

32 Relationships, behaviors, organization

rest for the soul

Page 8

When pastors are prophets

Ron Adams is pastor at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa.

I have always believed that Karl Barth was right: Christians ought to hold their Bibles in one hand and the newspaper in the other. The media frenzy surrounding the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright, though, gave me pause. Here are some random thoughts on the public controversy:

1. If anyone doubts the persistence of racism in our country, compare the outrage greeting Wright's language with the amused condescension greeting the equally extreme language of John Hagee. Where Hagee is treated as, at worst, a harmless crank, Wright is treated as evil incarnate. This makes me wonder: Is Wright's "crime" really his condemning of our culture's sins? Or is it that he is an African-American who ought to know better than to be publicly critical of this country?

2. When did patriotism become necessary to faithful preaching? When did the prophets only speak kindly of their own nation? When did Jesus become the servant of the state? And when did the true test of a preacher's gift become her adherence to a political party line? I believe we Anabaptists ought to be the first to say that no preacher is obliged to wave the flag. In fact, we ought to be the first to challenge such preaching as idolatrous. As compromised as we have become, surely we still understand ourselves as distinct from the state?

3. It astonishes me that in our self-proclaimed Christian nation, so few members of the corporate media have any clue about what pastors and congregations are about. If there weren't so much at stake, it would be laughable. To be fair, I suppose this says as much about the quality of our witness as it does the media's ignorance.

4. I am amazed that some folks think we can get a true picture of a pastor and her ministry by pulling quotes from sermons. The picture ought to include at least a few other things—like premarital counseling, hospital visits, countless meetings, baptizing teenagers and serving Communion to someone too frail to walk forward to receive it. It seems the media accepts the stereotype of the pastor who only works 30 minutes a week. I think there's more to being a pastor than preaching on a Sunday morning.

5. Imagine Jesus being selectively quoted. "If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off." "If your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out." "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down." "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple." If this is all we heard of the teaching and ministry of Jesus, all we knew of his life on earth, would we call him Lord? My guess is we'd all be busily looking elsewhere for salvation.

It is tempting to put the newspaper down, turn off the TV and the radio, and pretend that it's just Jesus and me.

But, thanks be to God, I've got a community of sisters and brothers who won't allow that. They insist that I must live as if what Jesus said is true. That means loving my enemies, working for justice, serving my neighbors and offering love and welcome and assistance to the most vulnerable among us.

When prompted by the Spirit, it also occasionally means speaking words of judgment and even condemnation of a culture that stands opposed to those things we claim to be good news. Words which may sound to some like those of the prophets, like those of Jesus. And, yes, like those from the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

The Mennonite

Vol. 11, No. 12, June 17, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412 894 8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

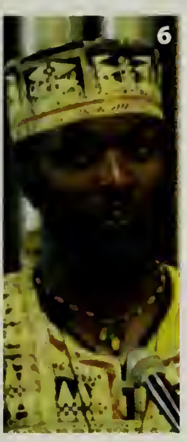
Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church USA

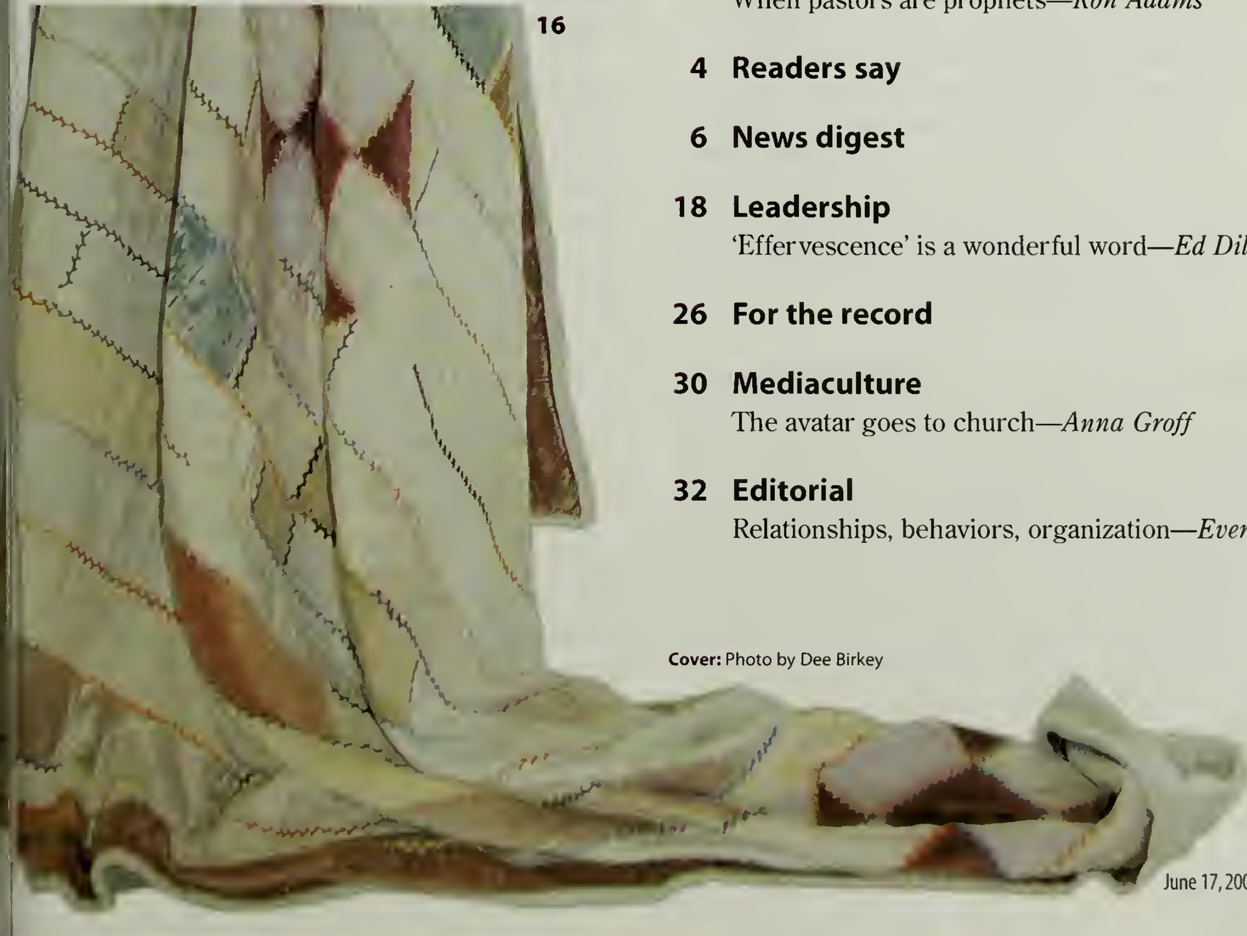
CONTENTS

JUN 21 '08
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

7


6

8


16

8 **Rest for the soul**
Exodus 20:8-11 and Matthew 11:25-30—*Mel Thomas*

12 **The holes I cannot fill**—*Ginnie Horst Burkholder*

14 **Into the light**
For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness—Psalm 18:28—*Emma Adams*

16 **Will the tattered quilt of loss ever be mended?**
When we lose loved ones to suicide—*Margalea Warner*

19 **Young Ukranian believers fight for faith**
Dueck serves youth with spiritual struggles and suffering from tuberculosis.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen*

20 **Former meth addict traces life to God**
John Thomas, Hesston College graduate, completes ministry experience.—*Susan Miller Balzer*

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Grace and truth**
When pastors are prophets—*Ron Adams*

4 **Readers say**

6 **News digest**

18 **Leadership**
'Effervescence' is a wonderful word—*Ed Diller*

26 **For the record**

30 **Mediaculture**
The avatar goes to church—*Anna Groff*

32 **Editorial**
Relationships, behaviors, organization—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Photo by Dee Birkey

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Cooperate with leaders

Regarding the restructuring of Mennonite Church USA: To assume that our denomination got everything "right" in 2001 is ludicrous. I heartily applaud the courage of our Mennonite Church USA Executive Board in listening carefully to all parts of the church in the six-year review. Having worked in conference leadership for the past 11 years, I am aware of friction, duplication and lack of coordination that is currently in our system. Transformation of all parts of the church needs to be an ongoing discernment as we faithfully discover the next steps for our church. I encourage all of us to prayerfully cooperate with our designated leaders and join in a collective effort to overhaul, release and enhance God's transformative future.—*Lloyd L. Miller, Goshen, Ind.*

Current problems not because of structure

While it is important for the Executive Board to explain the rationale behind the proposed structural changes for Mennonite Church USA, I found Moderator Waltner's article unconvincing ("The Season for Planting is Upon us," May 20). To provide a list of admirable qualities—such as collaboration, relevance, simplicity, responsiveness and empowerment—and imply that such will appear with a new structure is a real stretch. Further, she notes that the recent Mennonite Church Member Profile indicates we are getting older, losing young people and are less willing to share our faith. I have never heard the complaint that our current structure is the fault of those problems.

Waltner's opening story regarding the grandfather who had difficulty adapting to the tractor may have been tossed off as a humorous attention-getter, but it subtly warns anyone with doubts that they are just senile, old stick-in-the-muds and their task is to get with the program or wind up the butt of some loud guffaws.

Finally, since "the direction is set" and we "know what needs to be sown," sending Executive Board members to distant places seems like an effort at public relations that is hardly worth the price—unless they mean to gather funny stories about fearful people who are wont to holler "Whoa!" Now that might really sell.—*Wayne North, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Executive Board behavior

It is ironic that the proposal from the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board—that calls for greater collaboration among church agencies—is itself an example of non-collaboration among agencies. Instead of asking Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite Publishing Network and Mennonite Mutual Aid for ideas regarding how to better collaborate, the proposal mandates how such collaboration should happen, namely through restructuring, as if that were the only method to achieve greater collaboration and cooperation. I would have thought the proposal would model the behavior Executive Board is calling for.—*Chet Peachey, Goshen, Ind.*

***The Mennonite*'s voice squished?**

When I read that Mennonite Church USA Executive Board's vision is for a reformed and unified churchwide organization ("Executive Board Wants Radical Changes for Mennonite Church USA Structures," April 1), I became both hopeful and uneasy. I'm hopeful because I believe Mennonite Church USA has now existed long enough that it is time to evaluate how well our new structure is working—and adjust as needed. My perspective of Mennonite Church USA involvement is almost exclusively from the congregational level. For me, a congregation's connection to the funding structure seems indirect and somewhat disconnected.

But, I'm uneasy because *The Mennonite* is to be included in "one churchwide communication and identity system." Mennonite Church USA Bylaws assign the magazine three goals: (1) provide a forum for the voices within the denomination, (2) promote the ministries of and support identity building for Mennonite Church USA, and (3) offer an editorial voice distinctive from but collaborative with other leadership voices within Mennonite Church USA.

I fear that this voice could be squished into representing only the sound from the organizational top. What's "best" as seen from the top is not necessarily what is "best" as seen from the congregational level.—*D. Richard Miller, Goshen, Ind.*

IN THIS ISSUE

This turned out to be our "mental health issue," and we lead off with a call from chaplain Mel Thomas to recover a Sabbath rhythm in our lives (page 8). Emma Adams (page 14) and Margalea Warner (page 16) courageously share their experiences with difficult mental illnesses. Ginnie Horst Burkholder describes the process that led her to conclude she cannot give all the people she loves what they really need (page 12). In this time of war, prayer is an important resource for mental and spiritual health. A junior high Sunday school class wrote a prayer for peace that can help us all (page 13). This issue also concludes the commencement coverage for Mennonite Church USA higher education (page 23).—*Editor*

Visualizing violence

J. Denny Weaver's thesis ("Visualizing Violence," May 20) is deeply flawed for it requires one to set aside and ignore huge portions of the Bible—including most of the book of Revelation. To accept Weaver's thesis, one must attribute to Jesus motivation that Jesus did not exhibit. For instance, the experience at the well of Sychar had as its driving force the conversion of the woman and the residents of the town. In cleansing the temple, not once but twice, Jesus illustrated the basic need existing in the Jewish community to recover the respect and worship of God that he required. The house of God was not to be a den of robbers. If any remodeling of the social order occurred, it was incidental to Jesus' mission.

It is astonishing, and yet not surprising, how higher criticism and the preoccupation with hermeneutics devalues the Scripture and turns Jesus into just another social activist.—*John O. Yoder, Manheim, Pa.*

I appreciated J. Denny Weaver's attempt to create a wall of separation between violent and nonviolent responses that will block the "slippery slope" that lands us in unintended violence. He clearly draws the line between witness and protest on the one side and coercive enforcement on the other. But is there no place for the coercive enforcement of a just order in the Christian ethic? Is there no justification for the forceful restraint of criminal conduct in progress?

I agree that Christians are committed to suffering harm rather than inflicting harm on the offender. And I am all for "restorative justice" after the fact, but how are Christians to respond when they see lethal violence being done to the "neighbor" and could stop it by use of coercive force?

Perhaps a better way to approach the issue is to revisualize the nature of violence as that which violates the integrity of God's image in human beings. Verbal abuse of God's image in children—in the process of legitimate coercive physical discipline—is violence. Forceful restraint—even physically harmful restraint of an adult in order to stop violent conduct and protect the neighbor—may not violate the image.

Let's make action that disrespects and debases the integrity of our God-given dignity the dividing line between legitimate coercion and violence.—*C. Norman Kraus, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Say something good about United States

Regarding J. Denny Weaver's article, "Visualizing Violence" (May 20): I would like to see a few articles in *The Mennonite* about the good things that the United States does instead of always "damning" the United States. Didn't Jesus use force when he used whips to chase out the money changers?—*Joseph Graber, White Pigeon, Mich.*

Watch our language

Watch our language! Regarding the language in "Confessional Evangelism" (April 15) on page 13 top right column: I'm surprised you would publish such language in a Christian paper, especially Mennonite. I can read that trash in any magazine.—*John L. Troyer, Engadine, Mich.*

Disappointed by review of *Expelled*

Steve Carpenter's review of the pro-Intelligent Design (ID) movie *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* (Mediaculture, May 20) was deeply disappointing because the author obviously has very little background knowledge of the film or the subjects it addresses. *Expelled* is full of factual inaccuracies. The anti-ID scientists seen in *Expelled* were hand-picked for their known antipathy to religion and were given a false understanding of the film's subject matter. While many scientists are nonbelievers, many others are confessing Christians; the vast majority see no incompatibility between belief in God and acceptance of scientific fact.

For a much more accurate, thoughtful and highly readable alternative to *Expelled*, I recommend Michael Ruse's excellent book, *Can a Darwinian be a Christian?* (Cambridge University Press: 2001). I hope it won't spoil the ending if I say that the answer, contrary to what *Expelled* would have you think, is a resounding Yes.—*Jeremy Yoder, Moscow, Idaho*

Readers of Steve Carpenter's review of *Expelled* should keep in mind an important concept that was not explicitly stated in the essay: In order for the answer to a question to be a scientific answer, there must be some possibility that a scientific test could show that the answer is false. Otherwise, the question falls into some other area of human experience (e.g. philosophy or theology). If a scientist states that his work in science leads him to conclude that there is no Intelligent Designer involved in the creation and operation of the universe, that conclusion is not scientifically based because no scientific test could show it to be false. If scientists who are Christian state that we are confident that God is the Intelligent Designer who created the universe as best we know in a way consistent with the explanations of biology, geology, astronomy and cosmology, then that is a statement of faith, not a scientific conclusion. *(This letter continues on page 31.)*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Regarding the rest that comes with a Sabbath rhythm: (52 votes)

- ○ I regularly take a Sabbath rest (60%)
- ○ I sometimes take a Sabbath rest (27%)
- ○ What is "Sabbath rest"? (13%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Readers Say continues on page 31.

IN BRIEF

Snyder returns to EMU as provost

Lee F. Snyder, former vice president and academic dean at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., will return to EMU to serve as interim provost for the 2008-09 school year. She succeeds Beryl H. Brubaker, who is retiring this summer after 37 years. Snyder was vice president and academic dean of EMU for 12 years before becoming president of Bluffton (Ohio) University from 1996 until retiring in July 2006. Snyder joined the EMU faculty in 1974 and taught part-time in the humanities and in English while serving as an assistant in the dean's office from 1974-1982.—*EMU*

CPT reports blocked road

On May 28 the Israeli military blocked the road between the village of At-Tuwani and the city of Yatta, using concrete blocks from the dismantled wall along Route 31. The road is the main vehicle access for Palestinians in the South Hebron Hills to travel to and from the city of Yatta that serves as the economic hub for the region. —*Christian Peacemaker Teams*

Shake up at Mennonite Mutual Aid

GOSHEN, Ind.—Eighteen months after becoming president of Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA), Larry Miller unveiled a new leadership structure for the stewardship agency of Mennonite Church USA. In an address to employees on June 3, Miller said the changes were not related to other discussions about reorganizing MC USA's national structure.

The new team will lead streamlined operations via four departments instead of the six current departments—each with its own senior vice president. The four new departments are: corporate services, finances, sales and distribution, products and services.The new team will take the remainder of 2008 to develop each department.

One current senior vice president was named to a new role. Rod D. Diller, senior vice president for trust and foundation services, will lead the sales and distribution department. This will include MMA field personnel such as counselors, church relations managers, foundation and trust representatives, and credit union service staff.

Mel Classen, who currently serves as MMA's chief financial officer in a vice-president role will continue in that role as a senior vice president and oversee accounting and actuarial services, back-office financial operations, and corporate assets and investments.

James Alvarez was named senior vice-president of corporate services. This department will include human resources, information technology, marketing and communications, stewardship education, fraternal services, strategic planning, research and product development areas.

David Gautsche will become senior vice president of products and services. This includes all MMA products and services as well as those offered to members through MMA's partners.

Four current senior vice presidents will not be included in the new team: John L. Liechty, Steve Garboden, Steven R. Martin and Vyron Schmidt. They currently lead, respectively, financial services, health services, marketing and fraternal ministries.

"John Liechty … will retire when the new MMA structure is in place and a new president of MMA Praxis Mutual Funds is named," said Judith Martin Godshalk, MMA's communication director. Godshalk said the remaining senior vice presidents are "in conversation [with the new team] about possible roles and responsibilities that would fit going forward."—*Everett J. Thomas*

Vada Snider

Chapels feature students from Kenya at Bethel

John Muchina, from Kenya, gives a brief meditation during a chapel service at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. The student-led chapel at Bethel featured stories and songs from several Kenyan students. —*Bethel College*

Goshen College remembers talented student

GOSHEN, Ind.—On the same stage that junior Deanne Binde played the funny and imaginative character Ellie in the fall main-stage play "Step on a Crack," the Goshen (Ind.) College community gathered on May 29 to remember Binde and pray for her family. A tragic automobile accident took her life when she was traveling home to Lake Park, Minn., at the end of the school year on May 22.

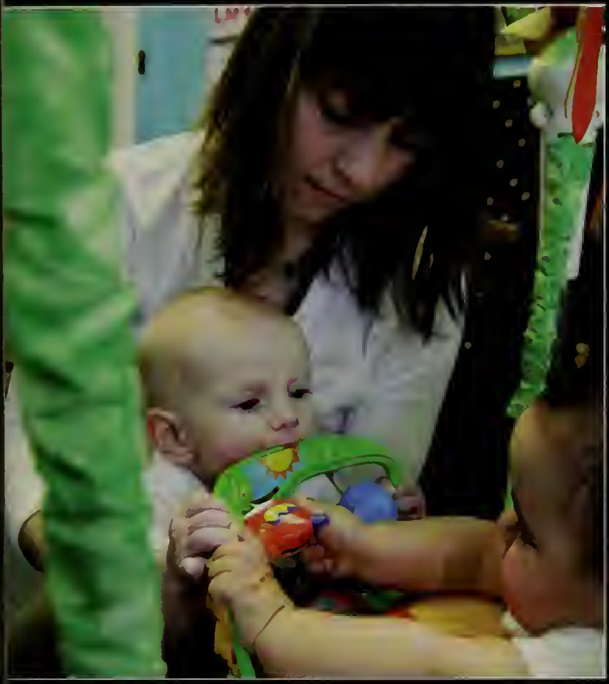
About 70 members of the Goshen College community gathered to pray, sing and share memories of Deanne, while, simultaneously, a memorial service was being held at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Lake Park. Thirty-eight students, faculty and staff attended the memorial service.

Deanne, a communication and theater major, was the daughter of Dale and Debbie (Saunders) Binde. In the Goshen community, she volunteered with Meals on Wheel and La Casa, and regularly attended St. John's Catholic Church.—*Goshen College*

Second group finishes disaster management

HESSTON, Kan.—Five Hesston College students were recognized for completing the two-year disaster management program on May 3. This year's graduates are the second group to finish the program, begun in the summer of 2005 as a cooperative effort of Hesston College and Mennonite Disaster Service. A ceremony honoring six graduates a year ago on May 5, 2007, began about 36 hours after a disastrous tornado swept through the town of Greensburg, Kan.

The 2008 graduates are Ben Kropf, Oregon City, Ore.; Jaclyn Shaw, Croghan, N.Y.; Caleb Gugel, Wauseon, Ohio; Amanda Koch, Colorado Springs, Colo.; and Matt Smith, Gibson City, Ill.



Cara Rufenacht

VSer supports women on motherhood journey
ennonite Voluntary Service worker Heidi Willems holds icah as they play with Ezekiel at the Guadalupe House in San ntonio, Texas. The house is a transitional shelter for women es 18 and older who are pregnant or caring for a child one ar old or younger.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Russ Gaeddert, director of the disaster management program, recounted the many classroom and off-site service projects and meetings during the past two years.

"Throughout all these experiences, you have learned countless new skills and met many new people," Gaeddert said. "You have been the hands and feet of Jesus, selflessly serving others. This summer, you will once again serve with MDS on the Gulf Coast in Pass Christian, Miss., New Orleans and Diamond, La., and in La Crete, Alberta."—*Hesston College*

Nebraska MDS unit responds to local tornado

KEARNEY, Neb.—Cecil Kennel, Mennonite Disaster Service Nebraska unit chair, reported May 30 that he and Leroy Friesen, MDS Nebraska vice chair, will investigate the tornado that hit Buffalo County in Nebraska.

That tornado went through the area on May 29, following I-80 turning over vehicles, irrigation pivots and affecting many farmsteads.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) stated in their National Situation Report of May 29, that there was "an outbreak of strong super cell thunderstorms [that] produced tornadoes, large hail and damaging winds across south central Nebraska and portions of North Central Kansas." Wyoming, South Dakota and Iowa also reported tornado activity. Kearney, Neb., was the hardest hit, resulting in damage to 60 homes and a building on the campus of the University of Nebraska-Kearney, as well as the exposition center at the local fairgrounds. FEMA said there were no reports of fatalities or injuries. A State of Emergency was declared by Nebraska Governor Dave Heinemann.—*MDS*

EMU and Korean college sign agreement

HARRISONBURG,Va.—Representatives of Bell International School (BIS), Nonsan City, Chungcheongnam-do, Korea, and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., gathered May 27 at EMU to formalize an agreement between the two institutions to encourage student exchanges and strengthen relational ties. BIS operates from a Christian philosophy that emphasizes community, language proficiency, computer education and music. Similar to EMU, students are required to take part in cross-cultural study programs that include trips to China, Canada and the Philippines.—*EMU*

Helen Kruger receives AMBS service award

ELKHART, Ind.—Helen Kruger of Saskatoon, Sask., is the recipient of the 2008 Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., alumni ministry and service award.

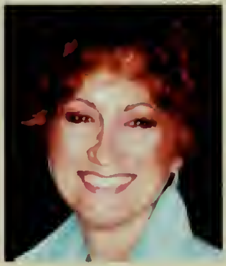
Education has been a theme through Kruger's own life—both as a student and as a teacher. This started when she was 17 and served as teacher of a country school in Saskatchewan. She also was houseparent and dean of women at Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College, and taught at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont., and in Clinical Pastoral Education programs. Through these experiences, she pursued her own learning: a B.S. in nursing at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in 1958, an M.R.E at AMBS in 1961, an M.A. in English in 1974, an M.A. in German in 1980, and an M.Div. at AMBS in 1996 after taking Clinical Pastoral Education courses in Saskatoon.

Kruger was the first woman to serve on the board of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, beginning in 1974 and serving for 12 years. She was also at the forefront of other women in ministry and leadership roles. After receiving the M.Div., she became one of only 16 women who were certified teaching supervisors in CAPPE, the Canadian association of chaplains.—*AMBS*

—compiled by Anna Groff

IN BRIEF

Bethel announces new business VP



Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., president Barry Bartel has announced the appointment of Laurie E. Tietjen, Hollister, Mo., as the college's new vice president for business affairs. She has a B.S. in education from the University of Missouri and is a Certified Public Accountant. She replaces Lowell Peachey, who resigned a year ago, and interim Gregg Dick.—*Bethel College*

Agreement reached for pacifist professor

The dispute over whether Wendy Gonaver, a lecturer at California State University at Fullerton, Calif., could teach there without signing a loyalty oath was resolved on June 2. Gonaver was fired last year because she refused to sign the oath, citing her beliefs as a Quaker and a pacifist. She was willing to sign it if allowed to attach a note clarifying her beliefs. But the university ruled that her language unduly qualified the oath. Gonaver was permitted to attach a revised explanatory statement to her signature on the oath. Gonaver will teach two courses at the university this fall.—*The Chronicle of Higher Education*

Rest for the soul

Exodus 20:8-11
Matthew 11:25-30

by Mel Thomas

It's been documented by those observing human behavior that our world is run by tired people. Many long for a way of life that has periods of true rest and relaxation. Society is obsessed with competition, work and productivity. Even our leisure time is scheduled and goal-oriented.

"No one needs a vacation so much as the person who has just returned from one," Elbert Hubbard said.

How does it make us feel that the pilot in the plane on which we travel 600 miles per hour in the busy skies, is tired? How does it make us feel that the surgeon who will perform the operation on a family member, loved one—or possibly us—is tired? How does it make us feel that the teacher who spends more hours a week with our children or grandchildren than they do with their parents, is tired? How does it make us feel that the leaders of our world with power to promote peace or launch a cruise missile are tired?

Postmodern, 21st-century culture offers a smorgasbord of solutions to all who are weary and worn down. Online servers seduce us with stuff guaranteed to make our lives easier. Global Positioning Systems talk us to our destinations. The new Lexus LS460 flagship sedan, equipped with the optional Advanced Parking Guidance System, parallel parks itself while the driver downloads the latest email messages from her Blackberry.

Our senses are bombarded with befuddling amounts of stimuli. In a world so shrunken by satellite feeds that we are capable of simultaneously feeling a part of events in Iraq, Lebanon, France and New York, it's hardly surprising that small amenities of courtesy and consideration are in danger of becoming casualties of technology.

Wellness centers promote personalized fitness programs designed to make us thinner, firmer and friskier. Digital television blitzes us with mindless entertainment, endless sporting events, annoying infomercials and a few educational opportunities.

And with all this stuff, we are tired. How many magazines can we consume before we've seen them all? How long can we cruise the Internet before the chat lines all start to sound the same? How many times can we climb the Stairmaster before our bodies remind us, "This just ain't working"? How long can we keep our thumb on the remote, only to conclude that after 250 channels flip past our eyes nothing really captures our interest?

One of postmodern culture's fantasies that feed our inherent weariness is the notion we must all be "self-made." So we expend enormous amounts of energy trying to decide what image we will make ourselves into this day, this week, this month, this year, this job, this marriage, this friendship. And we are tired; worn out.

Underneath all this push for self-sufficiency is a deep unrest, a chasm of fear and distrust. It is the fear that we're not good enough, not competent enough. We are driven by a desire for love; for approval.

Jim Forbes, pastor at Riverside Church in New York City, calls this fundamental unrest our "advanced secularity." Put simply, we all believe in God. We just believe God can't really heal us, can't really do anything. So we all pursue idols—especially our incessant activity and production and consumption—produce and consume and produce and consume. We keep the engines running because we believe our own hard work is the only way to health and security. We believe in God. But deep down we fear idleness because we don't really believe God can do anything without us. If we stop producing and consuming, what will happen? What will happen if we stop? The result? We are tired.

In her book *Practicing Our Faith*, Dorothy Bass writes, "Americans … need to be reminded they do not cause the grain to grow, and that their greatest fulfillment does not come through the acquisition of material things. Moreover, the planet needs a rest from human plucking and burning and buying and selling."

"Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God" (Exodus 20:9-10a).

God, busy creating for six days, took a day off. Here is a God who rests, who in the words of Walter Wink, says, "I'm not going to the office tomorrow. I've put in long hours every day all week. Tomorrow I'm putting up my feet and enjoying what I've accomplished."

But if we stop, what will happen to us? Barbara Brown Taylor, one of our great American preachers, said the call to Sabbath rest is a call to lie fallow, to stop, to be useless, idle. We don't take Sabbath rest so we can then work harder. It is rest for God. The practice of Sabbath, she continues, is a practice of death and resurrection. Sabbath is lying inert in death. It is to suffer the death of uselessness, to be raised up to one's true nature. It is a day to do nothing but worship God; a day to mop up the residue of the week.

Sabbath is lying inert in death. It is to suffer the death of uselessness, to be raised up to one's true nature.—Barbara Brown Taylor

One day each week I live as if all my work were done. I live as if the kingdom has come. When I do, the kingdom comes—for one day at least. Sabbath is my regular date with the Divine Presence that enlivens both body and soul.

Alice Walker, best known for *The Color Purple* wrote, “Anybody can observe the Sabbath, but making it holy surely takes the rest of the week.”

It’s been said that our great-grandfathers called it the Holy Sabbath, our grandfathers called it the Sabbath, our fathers called it Sunday. Today, we call it the weekend.

The word “Sabbath” comes from the Hebrew “Shabbat,” which means rest, or cessation of activity. Another meaning of Shabbat identified by Rabbi S.R. Hirsch means to put everything in its proper place, which can only be done when we step back from our material pursuits, and look at life from a different perspective.

“Great wisdom,” wrote C. Welton Gaddy, “resides in knowing when to work and when to rest, when to speak and when to listen, when to be active and when to be still.”

Most of us do not do enough sitting, except when we are forced to and, therefore, resent it. It’s a cultural problem; the rushing, the reluctance to sit.

Genuine rest is given when we stop. So near to stopping as the one who said, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me … and you will find rest for your souls.”

Jesus’ invitation to rest was addressed to people desperately trying to find God, people desperately trying to be good.

These warm words of wisdom have comforted Christians for centuries. But they are puzzling words too. A yoke was used on work animals and prisoners of war. It was a common metaphor for submission and obedience. Yet here the yoke would seem to symbolize rest, freedom and liberation. And so we want to know, how can a yoke be easy?

It’s helpful to look at the context of these words from Jesus. Just prior to this invitation, Jesus shocks us with some servant/cross theology: “Don’t think I have come to bring peace … but a sword … I have come to set children against their parents … those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it” (paraphrase of Matthew 10:34-39).

For the orthodox Jew, religion was a thing of endless rules and burdens. Jesus said of the scribes and Pharisees, “They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them” (Matthew 23:4).

Jesus’ invitation to rest was addressed to people desperately trying to find God, people desperately trying to be good, people who were driven to weariness and despair.

What about us? Are we tired? Do we go to great lengths trying to find God? Have we established routines, good routines in our attempts to be “good people,” only to be driven to fatigue and despair?

“Take my yoke … learn from me … and I will give you rest.” The rest assured by Jesus is not some kind of magical cure for all the misfortunes in our lives. It’s not to make us immune from pain, fear, failure, disappointment or rejection. Jesus was no stranger to any of these emotions himself.

Jesus’ cure for exhaustion and frustration is giving you and me something significant to do: participation with him in ministry. The invitation from Jesus is to come to his “Yoke Shop” and be fitted for service. Jesus assures us the task is not a burden to gall or gore us. Our tasks are tailor-designed to fit us.

The “light and easy” yoke we bear and wear is one of submission to God’s commands and directions for our lives. And we are assured that being yoke-mates with Jesus, is not as difficult as bearing the burdens placed on us by postmodern gadgets.

What might that something significant be?

We find yoke stuff as close to us as Jesus was to the people of his day. It could be as difficult as attempting to redirect the life of a family member or friend caught in addictive behavior. It could be as simple as sharing a smile with the person we meet in the hallway, corporate office, warehouse or kitchen. It could be as difficult as remaining silent when we would normally speak, or as simple as speaking when we are normally silent. Yoke-mating with Jesus is in the day-to-day, ordinary stuff of life with people as close as family, friends and coworkers.

Because of who he is, Jesus is able to ease the burden of our tired and overwhelmed world. His words are an invitation for us to be his yoke-mates, to discover the will of God that transforms the world.

Several years ago I stood by my brother Sam's bed at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. Marian, Sam's wife, was by his side during the one-week regiment of chemotherapy. Physically and mentally exhausted, Marian suggested we go for a walk.

A bitter-cold December night in Manhattan, the city was ablaze with lights, traffic and energy. Marian directed us to a small Catholic church on York Street. The warmth of the sanctuary and beautiful symbols were an instant comfort to me.

Along with about 10 other people scattered throughout the holy space, we sat in silence. Scanning the beauty of the building, my eyes stopped on a very powerful and moving sculpture of the body of Jesus. Without saying anything to Marian, I got up from the pew, walked to the figure and knelt in reverence. It was then I saw inscribed above the outstretched arms of Jesus, words that bathed my troubled spirit, "If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest. Take the yoke I give you. Put it on your shoulders and learn from me. I am gentle and humble, and you will find rest. This yoke is easy to bear, and this burden is light."

Through my tears I observed that the figure, Jesus, was wearing a crown. It was not an emerald-studded halo, but one of ugly thorns. There was makeup on his face—not a hue blended into skin tones but drops of blood dripping from the thorn-pierced skull. There was something in the hands—no pass for a five-day cruise down the Mediterranean. No. Rusty spikes were driven through the swollen palms.

The broken, bloodied, body of Christ, hanging on a cruel cross and these words of comfort? Yes. Yes.

I don't know how long I was there. Standing, I lit four candles: one for my brother Sam, his wife Marian and two daughters. I returned to the pew beside Marian. We sat together in silence, a silence interrupted only by the sobs of a weary and burdened spouse. Not a word was spoken between us. But it was a sacred and holy moment. The weight of a killer disease, the burden of trying to be a good brother, shifted from my shoulders to that of yoke-mate, Jesus.

Each of us has become weary of carrying too much weight over terrain that has long ceased to be interesting. To a "weary and heavy-laden" community of faith, Jesus offers something radically new. Rest. Real rest. Rest from disappointment of needing to bring closure to a lifelong dream, from the untimely death of one very near and dear. It is rest from weariness, shame, loss associated with failure.

Each of us has become weary of carrying too much weight over terrain that has long ceased to be interesting.

The next time someone invites you to an event—or to add something to an already scheduled life—allow God's Spirit to bring before you the invitation from Jesus. Knowing you want to say No, but uncertain how to do so, consider this response: "Sorry, but I have an appointment at the yoke shop to have my yoke adjusted." It could be the beginning of an interesting conversation.

Are you tired? Worn out? "Come to me. Get away with me," is the invitation from Jesus, "and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me. Watch how I do it. Learn from the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me, and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." (from *The Message*)

Mel Thomas is chaplain and director of pastoral care at Mennonite Home Communities, Lancaster, Pa. This article is adapted from a meditation at an October 2007 retreat for board members.

The holes *I cannot fill*

by Ginnie Horst Burkholder

Something is rumbling around inside of me to be heard or felt and I don't know exactly what it is. I dreamed last night that we had visitors, a couple, and they were eating breakfast. When I asked if they would like some toast the man gave me a long, very exact request with spreads I had never heard of. I felt overwhelmed and frustrated because I knew I couldn't give him what he wanted. The wife looked exasperated and said something, to let me know whatever I had was OK.

I have sat in church at different times in the last years and—looking over the crowd—realized and tried to come to terms with this truth: there is no one among all those dear people that can be what I really need. For my needs to be met, I am required to ask, seek and knock—and then trust God to provide people here and there who will stand in the gaps.

While grieving the loss of the husband I once knew, I have grieved that he can no longer fill a hole of need. As a slow but progressive dementia strips away his abilities, I must let go of the benefits I have reaped in the walk that once defined our relationship.

It was he who was the safe connector and buffer to the harsh reality of the fractured world. At the end of the day a short back rub could set it all right. Now, tremors make simply eating a challenge. He was the risk-taker who pulled me along to places I would not go alone. Now, I blaze a trail for both of us in many decisions that must be made. It was him telling his stories from our lives that drew people in and surrounded us with relationships. Now, with so many special needs, it is a challenge to find places where we can connect. He was the one who remembered every face and every person and every street name. Now, I no longer can count on that resource. I can no longer use him to stop up a hole of need for security and significance.

I have grown a little and given up a lot. Now I am seeing another truth. I see that I cannot possibly give all the people I care about and love what they really need. I am going to disappoint them, anger them, hurt them and be less than they want me to be. I see that in a few blessed moments of grace I may be able to gift them with myself, but ultimately the hole they are trying to fill, the need for significance and security they are scrambling to meet, is not mine but theirs and God's to fill. If I believe I can do it for them, then I have stepped into God's shoes. I cannot save anyone. Not even my beloved. I can only give and receive many expressions of love.

And so I hear the rumblings. They are the voices of all of fallen, hurting humanity wanting for God's promise that all things be made new. They are our human groanings as we stretch to engage our trust in God's kingdom of perfectly met needs and perfect love.

Ginnie Horst Burkholder is a member of First Mennonite Church, Canton, Ohio.

Ultimately, the hole they are trying to fill—the need for significance and security—is not mine but theirs and God's to fill.

Prayer for peace

Dear God,

We are too young to vote for the president ...
Yet we are suffering the consequences of war.

This nation has been at war almost as long as we can remember ...
We pray for the 5-year-olds in Iraq who know nothing but war.

We believe in you, God, and we thank you for this day, today.

God please forgive us for malice and deceit,
and we ask for your power to be open-minded and caring instead.

Please rid us, as individuals and as a country, of the need to be
aggressive, have us vs. them mentality, and be fearful.

God, we trust you.

We don't understand this war very much; we try to pay attention,
but it is overwhelming to figure out what's really going on.

God, please forgive us for committing the seven deadly sins, for
they are elements of war. We pray you bestow us with the
seven virtues, for they are elements of peace.

In the merciful name of Jesus we pray,

Amen

This prayer was written by the junior high school Sunday school class at Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind. Sarah Thompson is their teacher. Each week a new prayer for peace is posted at http://peace.mennolink.org/iraq_a_prayers.html

Into the light

by Emma Adams

For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.—Psalm 18:28 (KJV)

This is a true account of my struggle with mental illness. It is a story that may help those who are also suffering and those who suffer along with them.

As a woman in my early thirties, I had high expectations for my future. I wanted a decent job, a husband and a home. I wasn't worried about the little things that were going wrong—the sleepless nights, the restlessness and lack of appetite. It wasn't until I began hearing (what psychiatrists call) "command voices" that I got scared. These voices were both familiar and strange.

When I was a little girl, my father used to read me stories about goblins, wizards and elves. Some were evil, some good. The struggle between good and evil was always there. Now, however, parts of these stories, that I had so much enjoyed as a child, were coming back to haunt me in unusual and unexpected ways.

I woke up one day and thought God and Satan were talking in my head. You may wonder how I knew which was which. I cannot say. I just knew. That fact alone may suggest that there is yet some hope for my recovery. At the time, however, I believed both of these voices. They were so loud and so very real. The voices told me that the world was about to end. That I was being chased by demons. That the demons were coming to eat me alive.

On the morning of June 12, 2004 (my mother tells me), I left a message on her answering machine telling her that I loved her and goodbye. Several hours later I was found lying incoherent and barefoot in a mud puddle. Although I do not remember the particulars of that episode, my mother was told that, when asked to identify myself, I responded, "I am the Bride of Satan." I was taken to a local hospital, after which I was transferred to the psychiatric unit of a larger facility better equipped to deal with my problem. After one week, I was released with a prescription. But it was too late in the day to get this filled at my clinic. Over the next 12 hours, I began to hallucinate again.

This time—June 18, 2004,—the command voices told me to get into a vehicle and drive. I was confused and did not know which voice was which. I am ashamed to say that I obeyed. I drove straight into an elderly lady's car, drove her into a ditch, then drove into a propane tank. When the police and paramedics finally arrived at the scene, they found me convinced that I would have a demon companion by my side in the ambulance.

I was lucky not to have been hurt. The elderly woman was unlucky. She died an hour later.

I was kept in a locked psychiatric ward. On the night of July 4, I was given extra medications because I was terrified of the fireworks over the

river near the hospital. Six weeks later, partly on the basis of the hospital's report and partly on the basis of the police investigation at the scene, I was arrested, dressed in an orange jumpsuit, chained, handcuffed and charged with murder in the first degree.

I was taken to the county jail where my condition deteriorated. However, during the next few weeks two doctors diagnosed my disease as a schizoaffective disorder (a chronic and disabling mental illness). So I was able to plead successfully NGRI (not guilty for reason of insanity).

Approximately two months later, I was transferred from the jail to a secured mental-health facility. There my doctor reaffirmed my condition to be schizoaffective. I stayed in this place from September 2004 to January 2006. The time went quickly as I slept through most of it. Eventually, I was transferred to a nonsecured hospital, where I stayed another year.

Finally, I was released to a supervised living facility. I was given a furnished apartment all to myself where medications were administered at the front desk. My grandma and grandpa helped me set up the kitchen with new supplies, the living room with a TV and phone, and the bedroom with family photos on the dresser and comforters and throw pillows on the bed. They placed by my bedside two statuettes of angels given to me by a friend.

I was being trained for a part-time job, and I also hoped to do volunteer work at a local animal shelter. I hoped someday to get cable TV so that I could watch the History Channel and nature programs.

This should have been a new beginning. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons I still don't fully understand, in less than two months the command voices came back with a vengeance. I told the staff about this, and they tried to help. They even sent me—for a couple of days—back to the hospital that had originally treated my disease. I was released, but not fully recovered.

On the night of July 4, 2007, Satan's voice was threatening me with a very long, slow, painful death if I didn't do his bidding immediately. And his bidding was to set myself on fire. (I am now learning strategies to resist such directives, but at the time I could not.) I suffered third degree burns over 24 percent of my body. I was life-flown to yet another hospital where I stayed in the burn unit for weeks. My aunt, I am told, stayed by my side, holding my hand, singing hymns such as, "Be Still My Soul, the Lord is on Thy Side." After several weeks and several skin grafts, I was moved to the rehabilitation center, where I learned how to breathe, talk and walk. In effect, I was busy being born again.

Eventually, I was transferred back to the same nonsecured hospital I'd lived in before. I reside there today. Many people would say that I've lost everything. My old life is gone. Because I am mentally ill, everything has changed, both for me and my family. Because my disease has caused the death of an innocent person, I join others, including numerous children and grandchildren, treading a painful path.

An important prerequisite of walking into the light is the condition of being enlightened. I now know that, even though I've lost, I've gained. I've gained a lot of insight into my illness. Gained maturity I didn't have before. Gained more love and support from my wonderful family than I thought possible. Most importantly, I've gained a close relationship with our Father God. He is my light in the midst of darkness. I have learned to love him more than ever. He is my strength.

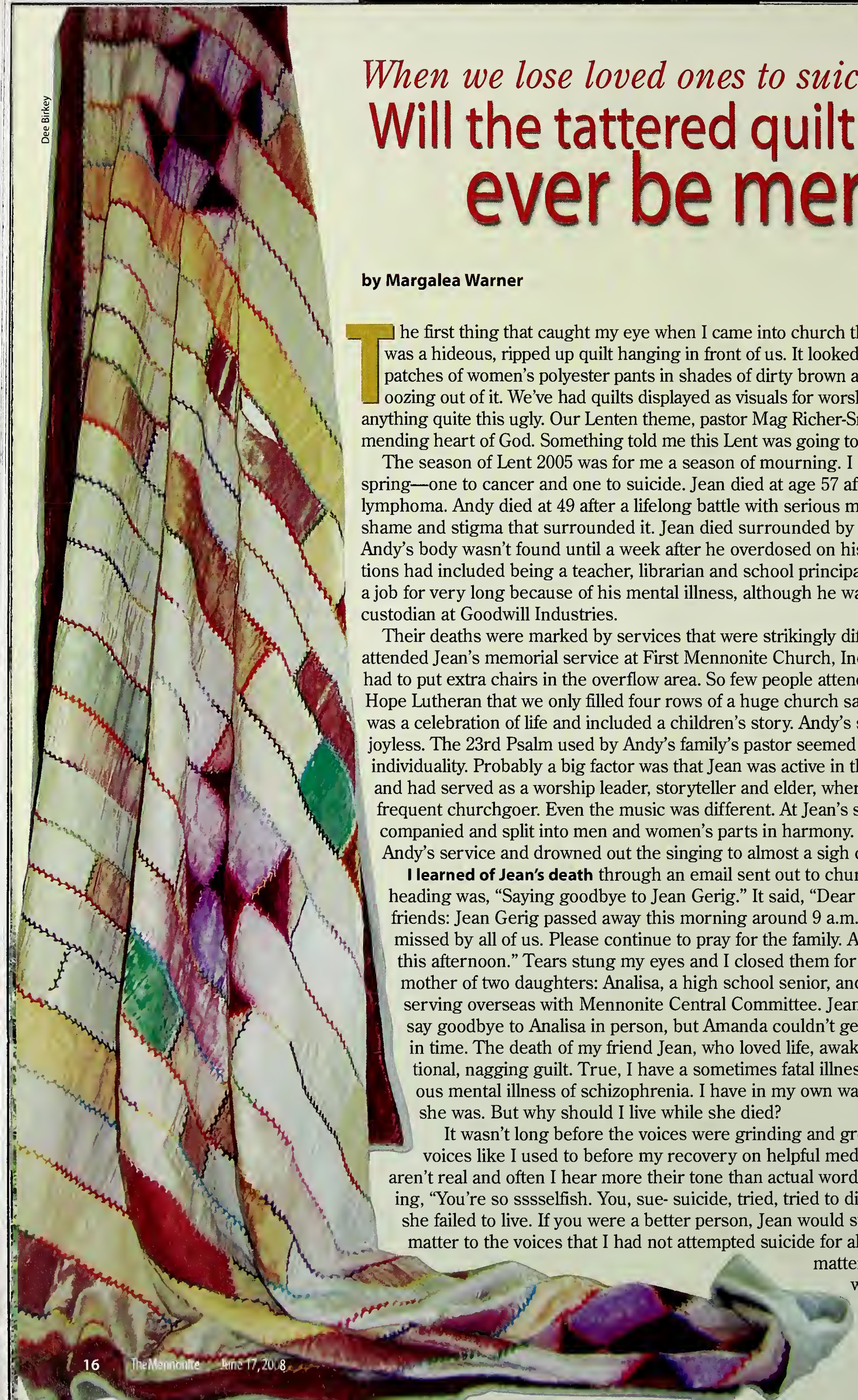
I believe he has spared my life for a reason—maybe so that I can share my story with others. I know firsthand the need to understand and empathize with the mentally ill.

Many Christians do not understand mental illness, as they might, for example, diabetes. They tend to shy away from those who suffer from major depressive episodes or psychotic disorders. Family members tend to be ashamed, thinking that a loved one's mental illness represents some kind of sin or character flaw—in a way that cancer, for example, doesn't. They are naturally uncomfortable in a secured setting, where visitors are required to submit to electronic surveillance before entering the visiting room.

These are but a few of the many reasons that people in psychiatric hospitals need your prayers. They are lost and alone in the dark. Pray that the light of God's love will touch them in a way they can understand. Pray that the families of these poor unfortunates may grow in God's grace. And pray that modern medicine can find a cure for these crippling diseases of the mind.

This article was submitted in January 2008 while Emma Adams resided at the H. Douglas Singer Mental Health Center in Rockford, Ill.

Correction: In the June 3 issue we listed an incorrect location for Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship. It is located in Chapel Hill, N.C.



Dee Birkey

When we lose loved ones to suicide, Will the tattered quilt of loss ever be mended?

by Margalea Warner

The first thing that caught my eye when I came into church the first Sunday in Lent was a hideous, ripped up quilt hanging in front of us. It looked like it was made from patches of women's polyester pants in shades of dirty brown and gray. Stuffing was oozing out of it. We've had quilts displayed as visuals for worship before, but never anything quite this ugly. Our Lenten theme, pastor Mag Richer-Smith said, was the mending heart of God. Something told me this Lent was going to be a long journey.

The season of Lent 2005 was for me a season of mourning. I lost two friends that spring—one to cancer and one to suicide. Jean died at age 57 after a 15-year battle with lymphoma. Andy died at 49 after a lifelong battle with serious mental illness and the shame and stigma that surrounded it. Jean died surrounded by family and friends; Andy's body wasn't found until a week after he overdosed on his medicine. Jean's vocations had included being a teacher, librarian and school principal. Andy had never held a job for very long because of his mental illness, although he was proud to work as a custodian at Goodwill Industries.

Their deaths were marked by services that were strikingly different. So many people attended Jean's memorial service at First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, that they had to put extra chairs in the overflow area. So few people attended Andy's service at Hope Lutheran that we only filled four rows of a huge church sanctuary. Jean's service was a celebration of life and included a children's story. Andy's service was muted and joyless. The 23rd Psalm used by Andy's family's pastor seemed generic and lacking in individuality. Probably a big factor was that Jean was active in the Mennonite church and had served as a worship leader, storyteller and elder, whereas Andy wasn't a very frequent churchgoer. Even the music was different. At Jean's service, we sang unaccompanied and split into men and women's parts in harmony. The organ dominated Andy's service and drowned out the singing to almost a sigh or a whisper.

I learned of Jean's death through an email sent out to church members. The heading was, "Saying goodbye to Jean Gerig." It said, "Dear Church family and friends: Jean Gerig passed away this morning around 9 a.m. She will be greatly missed by all of us. Please continue to pray for the family. Amanda will be arriving this afternoon." Tears stung my eyes and I closed them for a moment. Jean was a mother of two daughters: Analisa, a high school senior, and Amanda, who was serving overseas with Mennonite Central Committee. Jean had had the chance to say goodbye to Analisa in person, but Amanda couldn't get back from Zimbabwe in time. The death of my friend Jean, who loved life, awakened in me an irrational, nagging guilt. True, I have a sometimes fatal illness of my own—the serious mental illness of schizophrenia. I have in my own way been courageous like she was. But why should I live while she died?

It wasn't long before the voices were grinding and growling. I don't hear voices like I used to before my recovery on helpful medication. I know they aren't real and often I hear more their tone than actual words. But they were hissing, "You're so sssselfish. You, sue- suicide, tried, tried to die. You failed to die; she failed to live. If you were a better person, Jean would still be alive." It didn't matter to the voices that I had not attempted suicide for almost 12 years. It didn't matter to the voices that I wasn't powerful enough to have caused or prevented Jean's death.

The voices are about voicing, and they don't care how it makes you feel. The strangest thing about the voices is that they are mine, a product of my brain.

I learned of my second loss by phone. It was Martha, a friend who I usually only was in touch with Saturday mornings at breakfast club.

"Andy Little has died."

"Our Andy?" I wondered aloud. We didn't call each other by last names at breakfast club. "They found his body in his apartment. The death notice says he died of a sudden illness."

"Our Andy?" I said again.

Our Andy was a quiet, slightly balding man who was always a faithful attendee of "breakfast club" at the grocery store deli. He was too ordinary to die all of a sudden like that. He would take the Coralville, Iowa, bus all the way from downtown Iowa City to get Listerine mouthwash on sale at Target. I wondered if they noticed he wasn't on the bus. I wondered if the short order cook at HyVee wondered where the customer was who always ordered a blueberry pancake. I wondered if I could have prevented his death if I had been there.

After I hung up the phone I slammed my fist into one of my kitchen cabinets. I drew in a ragged breath and began to sob. I wrapped my arms around my chest and doubled over. I picked up my teddy bear and bit his ear as I rocked him.

Andy was part of a club nobody asks to join: the club of chronic mental illness. Our breakfast club had started as an agency activity, but for the last five years we had met independent of any counselor, having one by one left the agency due to funding being cut. We tried to look out for each other. There were four women: Martha, Linda, Ro and me. Andy was the only man. Once Andy, with a twinkle in his eye, asked, "What do all of us have in common?" We squirmed. We didn't generally talk about our diagnoses. He quickly answered, "We all wear glasses!"

I was sure Andy had not died of a sudden illness. I was sure that mental illness had been fraying the edges of his life until this final ripping to shreds. Like our hideous Lenten quilt.

The paper said the memorial service would be Friday at Hope Lutheran. I took a taxi there, still hoping it was the wrong Andy in the newspaper. I came into the church anteroom and hung up my coat on a rack next to only a few other coats. I signed my name in the guest book—one of only a handful of names. Friends and family were gathered in a large room outside the sanctuary in a circle of folding chairs.

A man who resembled Andy, but who was less flat in personality, introduced himself to me as Andy's brother Dan.

"Andy talked about you friends that met over breakfast," he said. "You were the only friends he ever mentioned. It means so much to me that you are here."

He gestured to a man who was bent over, shoulders sagging, twisting his hands. "This is our father."

"I'm so sorry for your loss, Mr. Little," I said to him.

"So am I," he said. He lifted his head for a moment and then looked back down at his hands.

The minister called us to enter the sanctuary for the service. We only filled the first four pews. We sang to the booming accompaniment of an organ, our voices sounding pitiful and small. Together we read the 23rd Psalm. There wasn't a body in this service—Andy was cremated—but something about the 23rd Psalm this time seemed so generic and dreary. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. All I could think of was Andy whispering, "I want. I want. I want." Why didn't he say it louder? We would have brought it to him if we could.

Some day we will all be included in a dazzling crazy quilt … No one will be ashamed and no one will hide secrets.

Sunday after Sunday of Lent there were more white stitches attempting to mend our shredded quilt. Patches of yellow and orange and red were appliquéd onto it. Pastor Mag preached sermons about the stuffing we try to fill our holes with; the stuffing never satisfies. She preached about God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit gathered around the quilting frame of grace.

For some reason Easter was harder for me than Lent. There was a totally new quilt with rainbow colored patches in perfect harmony. No holes.

This is my hope: Some day we will all be included in a dazzling crazy quilt. The jagged pieces of velvet will be next to the smooth silk and there will be tiny pieces of mirror embedded in the fabric. No one will be ashamed and no one will hide secrets. Scarlet stitches of healing love will hold it all together. The mending hands of God will make us whole.

Margalea Warner is a member of First Mennonite Church of Iowa City. She is active in the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and is a mentor for the Peer to Peer class. She wants people who suffer from mental illness and their loved ones to know there is hope for recovery.

'Effervescence' is a wonderful word

Ed Diller is moderator-elect of Mennonite Church USA

There are many "Robert Kreider stories" across our denomination. One of my favorites involves a meeting where people were attempting to develop a mission statement. We were having some difficulty and asked Dr. Kreider, an author, historian and a former president of Bluffton (Ohio) University, to comment on the draft. To my delight, instead of offering a rewrite, Dr. Kreider noted that the statement "does not sing—it needs more effervescence."

He was correct. The statement did not sing. I was struck that a true elder of the church would use a word like "effervescence" to describe how we (a younger group) should be thinking about the future. It's a feeling, a moment and a word that has remained close to the surface of my psyche.

The term "effervescence" has multiple meanings, yet you get the picture. It's that wonderful moment when soda is opened and the aromatic flavor jumps out in dancing bubbles. You know you're in for a delightful, satisfying experience.

During the past 30-plus years, I've had the opportunity to serve on many church and church-related boards. Each of the organizations served by those boards has been filled with people (both board and staff) committed to the church and its organizations. Sometimes the work has been demanding and frustrating and has required unexpected amounts of patience, humility and compromise.

Vision: Healing & Hope

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

However, no difficulty has outweighed the powerful visions, the enthusiasm for the work, the joy of serving and the difference those organizations make. The excitement for the work has been obvious, and the optimism of those involved has been contagious. These experiences have had effervescence; the exhilarating work and enthusiasm has bubbled and danced.

The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, supported by Executive Leadership, has been considering how we as a denomination can make even more progress toward our inspiring vision of healing and hope (see box).

In undertaking its work, the Executive Board and Executive Leadership have talked with people across the church and considered books, articles, surveys, studies and reports. Some of what we learned could lead to disturbing conclusions about our future as a denomination, and to be sure, we sometimes see and experience discouraging aspects of our current circumstances and culture.

But we are not pessimistic about the church's future; rather we are filled with joy and hope. That joy and hope are not born of blind optimism. They are fueled from a recognition that God is in fact working in the world and that many parts of our church are recognizing God's work and are joining in that work in a wonderful variety of energetic and enthusiastic ways.

Specifically, we see that optimism in:

- individual members of the church who speak with passion about their work within their congregations and their neighborhoods;
- growing Racial/Ethnic groups who have bountiful gifts to share with the church;
- vibrant rural and urban congregations who are both supporting their members and reaching out to others in varied ways;
- denominational agencies and programs working to address regional, national and global issues despite circumstances that in many instances would appear to be overwhelming.

The Executive Board and Executive Leadership have seen and experienced the fact that as a people and a denomination we already have a great deal of effervescence. We know that Mennonite Church USA is statistically insignificant, but we believe our participation in God's work in the world is making a significant difference. Perhaps we should ignore the parts of our church that may have difficulty "singing" right now and perhaps we should simply accept the trends of denominational decline and increasing consumerism and nationalism.

Instead, the Executive Board and Executive Leadership believe we need to find even more effective ways to support, enhance and release the effervescence that is created by faith in Jesus and ingrained in our church. I strongly believe the world is waiting for the delightful, satisfying message of healing and hope that our faith allows us to share.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Urgency and patience—**Steve Dintaman
- **Transforming the wounds of war—**Carolyn Holderread Heggen

Young Ukrainian believers fight for faith

Dueck serves youth with spiritual struggles and suffering from tuberculosis.

Until a month ago, Cliff Dueck began each school day preparing breakfast for seven angelic-looking adolescent boys before piling into his van before school.

Their sweet faces disguise the struggles the boys encounter in daily life, the fight to survive the consequences of their parents' choices, their environment and occult powers. Their challenges, both in belief and in life, are just beginning.

Two of the young teens, including Sergei—the group leader—are now in an isolated tuberculosis sanatorium for at-risk children. Tuberculosis, an opportunistic disease, becomes a serious health concern in areas like the Ukraine, where HIV/AIDS infection is high.

"Now the other boys don't come around as much," says Dueck of Mennonite Mission Network and Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

In a region where no official records of HIV/AIDS statistics exist due to societal taboo, up to 60 percent of the population may be infected.

"People living with tuberculosis are told that they have asthma and people with HIV are told that they have some other disease," Dueck says.

Because most of Dueck's breakfast buddies show symptoms of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and have open records with the police, he walks closely with the youngsters since they made a decision to become Christians in February.

That Saturday, the seven boys sauntered into the Kherson Mennonite Church in the Ukraine exuding trouble, just as worship began.

"We know them well," says Dueck, who has related to most of the boys since they were children and meets with them every Thursday. "They are all involved in the occult and the spirits that they submit to always mock our worship with hysterical laughter."

Dueck and Vasya Shevchenko, a young pastor, consulted quickly. They didn't want to ask the boys to leave, but if the boys stayed, no one would be able to concentrate on worship.

While Shevchenko began the service, Dueck led the boys into another room. Dueck asked them why they came to church. They said they had come to worship.

"Okay, then, let's do that," Dueck said.

They gathered in a circle and Dueck proposed that each person select a song and pray. When it was Dueck's turn, the commotion began.

"The evil spirits did their best to disrupt my prayer," Dueck says. "I stopped trying to pray and started a discussion about witchcraft, black and white magic, poltergeists and Christ's power."

Cliff Dueck

Cliff Dueck's breakfast and prayer companions from the right: Ura, Vitalik and Vova and a friend at summer Bible camp.

Dueck reports that involvement with the occult is the most common form of spirituality in the Ukraine. Three of the seven boys admit to direct contact, or live with people who have direct contact, with the spirit world.

"One boy's sister is preparing to be a witch," Dueck says. "The mother of another boy practices white magic. She has anointed the boys many times in a certain ritual. After the anointing—which they thought was a part of Christianity—they are driven to steal, drink, smoke and skip school."

After talking with the boys on Feb. 16, all seven decided to follow Jesus.

The boys returned every day for prayer. During the week following their conversions, the boys brought three friends to talk with Dueck. One of them also decided to follow Jesus. One refused.

Through the daily prayer breakfasts, Dueck attempted to give the young believers a good start on their day in an environment that is so hostile to spiritual and physical health.

"The boys are being pulled in two directions. When they don't pray with me for a few days, it hurts their personal spiritual development immensely. They often end up back where they were before," Dueck says.

In 1998, Dueck felt led by God to Kherson. There he met, Natasha Shevchenko, who would become his wife in 2000. Four months after their marriage, they began to serve as pastoral couple for the newly planted church in Mis, Ukraine. The Steinbach (Manitoba) Mennonite Church is their home church.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of Mennonite Mission Network*

Correction: In the June 3 article about podcasts, Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen,Ind., should not have been listed as offering podcasts of sermons.

Former meth addict traces life to God

John Thomas, Hesston College graduate, completes ministry experience.

Larry Bartel

John Thomas (left) confers with Mark Miller, pastor of Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan., as part of Thomas' supervised ministry experience.

John Thomas was completing requirements for the May 4 graduation from the Hesston (Kan.) College pastoral ministries program, as well as preparing to preach at Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston when he shared his story.

"I just give God the glory. He restored my mind, healed my body, and saved my soul—just completely," Thomas said.

He admits he should have had health defects from years of doing drugs. Except for a technicality on the way he was sentenced, he would still be doing time in prison.

"The only reason I am out today," Thomas said, "is because God intervened."

Thomas was released from Ellsworth (Kan.) Correctional Institution on June 9, 2006, and came to Hesston in the fall semester.

It started at age 18 when he was charged with possession of methamphetamine and served his first prison and drug treatment time. Later he met Bridgette, his wife, who said she knew he had a history of drug use, but did not know the extent.

"Bridgette never approved of any of the drugs," Thomas said.

Bridgette, a lifelong Christian, accepted Thomas' marriage proposal on one condition: that he go with her to church. They married in 1992.

"I'd gone through the motions of being a Christian," Thomas said. However, he did not accept Jesus into his life until he was in the Reno County jail on additional drug charges. He had been on meth and was "in bad shape."

"I got on my knees," he said, "confessed my sins and Jesus met me."

Thomas was spared the physical symptoms of withdrawal and slept peacefully for 15 hours.

"When I awoke, I had a hunger for the Word of God," he said. "I wasn't tempted (to do drugs) until in 2000 I decided to do it again."

He and Bridgette had bought a house in Pawnee Rock; Thomas worked as a truck driver and plumbing journeyman and served on the city council. The couple worked in the community and church where they led youth groups.

They hoped to get custody of a young girl that Bridgette had known for four years, but were not accepted because of Thomas' past. The girl committed suicide when she was 16, and John blamed himself for her death. He felt spiritually drained and was once again tempted to use and manufacture meth.

At age 34, he was high on meth for six weeks, and then was arrested and later sentenced to 13 and a half years.

"Just when things were good, I made some stupid choices," Thomas said.

They lost their house and gave up the possibility of having children when Thomas went to prison and Bridgette went to live with her parents in Pawnee Rock. But she stayed faithful to John and their marriage vows.

"God saved my marriage," Thomas said. "God is worth loving, knowing and sacrificing for."

Thomas was sentenced to the Ellsworth facility, where he was permitted to take Christian ministry classes offered by World Impact Ministries and the InnerChange Freedom Initiative, a ministry of Prison Fellowship.

Two hundred of the 850 medium security inmates were a part of InnerChange Freedom Initiative when Palmer Becker, former Hesston pastoral ministries director, first went to Ellsworth to teach in the fall of 2005. Thomas was one of Becker's first nine students.

Thomas continued with a preaching class taught by James Dunn, a Burrton (Kan.) Mennonite Church pastor working as an adjunct Hesston teacher. Hesston offered college credits and considered accepting Ellsworth residents into the Pastoral Ministries program.

Thomas had earned a total of 26 credit hours through World Impact Ministries and Hesston when he was released.

He was hired as associate pastor at New Life Foursquare Gospel Church in McPherson. Becker also helped Thomas enroll at Hesston.

"He has made himself a part of our community," said David Greiser, pastoral ministries director. "He also has a prophetic side. He's observed where our challenges are. He spoke straightforward things to the community in a chapel talk. He is an encourager of other students in the program."—*Susan Miller Balzer*

Note: John Thomas is completing his supervised ministry experience at Whitestone Mennonite Church during the spring semester and during this summer.

Shallal brings ‘Busboys and Poets’ vision

Iraqi-American entrepreneur offers perspective at Summer Peacebuilding Institute.

Jim Bishop

Nadia Bazzy, left, talks with Andy Shallal, right, following his presentation. Adeola Ojeniyi, center, is an SPI participant from Nigeria.

The Iraqi-American founder of a popular Washington, D.C., eatery shared his fresh perspectives on both entrepreneurship and the immigrant experience during the Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI) at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., on May 19.

Anas “Andy” Shallal, proprietor of the Busboys and Poets Café, took the title for his talk, “Let America Be America Again,” from a Langston Hughes poem. His café is also named for that famous African-American poet, who worked as a Washington busboy during the 1920s, Shallal explained to an audience of 160—including faculty, local visitors and 104 workers in humanitarian and conflict-resolution fields attending SPI from 40 nations.

“I never thought of America as a country as much as a dream,” said Shallal, who arrived in the United States with his family in 1966, at age 11.

Following Martin Luther King’s assassination, Shallal’s family, living in the Virginia suburbs, saw smoke from the fires of protest in Washington, D.C. The café sits in the now-thriving U Street corridor, epicenter of that unrest four decades ago.

“I miss the old country,” Shallal said. In 1983, the year he attained U.S. citizenship, the new government invaded Grenada. Yet he retains faith in the America of Hughes’ vision “as an ideal, not as a fact.”

“As an Arab and a Muslim, I still get uncomfortable traveling through airports,” he said, citing a friend being barred from a flight because of his t-shirt—not for its message (in English, “We will not be silent”)—but for its accompanying Arabic translation.

Shallal said the Iraq war “has made the job of SPI all the more important.” He cited hundreds of thousands of Iraqis killed, another 5 million forced into exile, and the shame of U.S. government-authorized torture.

Nevertheless, he retains faith in America’s values of freedom, equality, justice and the rule of law. “I want to hold this country to its ideals, “ he said.

With a backdrop of Shallal’s murals celebrating the Civil Rights movement, between 1,000 to 1,500 daily visitors to Busboys and Poets (http://www.busboysandpoets.com/) find progressive gatherings, theater productions, dialog groups including the Jewish/Arabic Peace Café and events held by EMU’s Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, of which SPI is a part. A smaller Busboys and Poets has opened in Arlington, Va.

A former immunologist, Shallal entered his family’s restaurant businesses but wanted to work for social change. Finding bankers skeptical of the latter intention, he emphasized the business aspect in loan applications.

Yet he said with a smile that the goals complement each other: “You can’t bring people together without food. It’s like mice; you set out food and they will come.”

Many attending SPI work for nongovernmental organizations. Shallal named two NGO’s that partner with the café: Teaching for Change, which operates a bookstore, and a cooperative that markets fair-trade coffee.

“I provide the space free,” he said, “They provide an added value for my customers.” He shares his business model at no cost and is advising a group from the Ivory Coast on it.

The entrepreneur also hopes to initiate an opportunity for customers to “buy social justice” by adding a donation to a selected NGO when they pay their tabs.

When Shallal spoke in a large Washington synagogue, congregants said they ha never met an Arab before. He finds a common paradox in urban communities where people “all live together, but they don’t all live together. They don’t interact.”

He said he considers it worthwhile to bring social-justice groups together, even when that seems like “preaching to the choir.”

Shallal continued, “The choir leads the singing, so it’s OK to preach to them sometimes.”—*Chris Edwards is a free-lance writer living in Harrisonburg, Va.*

Ethiopian college continues development

Northwest Mennonite Conference partners with Meserete Kristos College.

Carl Hansen

Meserete Kristos College's guest faculty residence under construction

Northwest Mennonite Conference has entered into an agreement with Meserete Kristos College in Ethiopia to partner in the school's development. The agreement calls for the NWC to supply funds for the following projects. All amounts are in Canadian dollars:

Up to $37,500 per year to enable 25 needy students to study at $1,500 per student per year.

Up to $183,000 for a guest faculty residence.

Up to $700,000 toward the construction of one dormitory on its new campus in Debre Zeit.

Up to $10,000 per year toward supplementing the support allowance of one Canadian missionary couple, Carl and Vera Hansen.

The Hansens, of NWC and long-term missionaries under Eastern Mennonite Missions, have assisted with the college since 1996.

Meserete Kristos College, in turn, agreed to act as the legal agent of the NWC to implement the agreement. This agreement enables the NWC to issue tax deductible receipts to any in Canada who wish to join in this partnership.

Construction of the guest faculty residence is scheduled for occupancy at the end of June. Construction of the dormitory will take another year to complete.

Meserete Kristos College, founded by the Meserete Kristos Church in 1994, has already graduated 384 people.

Expansion plans call for an introduction of liberal arts programs in fields such as community development, peace and conflict studies, and health administration.—*Meserete Kristos College*

Good work...*advanced.*

Susquehanna Valley Pregnancy Services (Lebanon, PA) contracted with AAI for a development audit.

ADVANCEMENT Associates
866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Becky Drumm, *Principal*
Rich Gerig, *Principal*
Mike Wiese, Dan Hess & Sherilyn Ortman, *Associates*

Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

Celebrate Fitness!

2008 Mennonite Sports and Fitness Classic

June 26-28
at Goshen College

Register now at:
http://marp.mennonite.net/

Questions? 269-353-8515

Sponsored by MARP and MMA
Photo by Jeff Arbogast, *The Goshen News*

150 more graduates add to 1,145 total

AMBS, Bethel College are final MC USA schools to hold commencements.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
May 24
26 graduates

With stories from his own ministry, Kyle Childress, pastor in Nacagdoches, Texas, challenged graduates of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., to discern what to support and what to resist in his commencement address on May 24.

Childress, pastor of Austin Heights Baptist Church, said "When you say 'yes' to God, you had better be prepared to say 'no' to the powers."

Of the 26 graduates, 10 have pastoral ministry assignments and five are seeking pastoral ministry assignments. Seven are involved in mission and service agencies as overseas workers, administrators or staff members. Others are pursuing chaplaincy and further graduate studies.

The service honored not only the 2008 graduates, but also graduates from 50 years ago and earlier.—*Mary E. Klassen*

Bethel College
May 25
124 graduates

Bethel College's 115th commencement on May 25 was the most colorful in recent memory. A major factor was the setting, outdoors under a bright blue Kansas May sky—the first time commencement has ever been outside. The school is located in North Newton, Kan.

Another reason was an unusually high number of students from Africa. The 2008 graduates represented seven countries other than the United States, all of them African, with six students from Nigeria, three from Kenya, two from Tanzania and one each from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Niger and Togo. All but two of the students graduated with degrees in nursing.

Nursing students wore the traditional orange stoles to signify their degrees and the Nigerian students had green and white stoles in the colors of the Nigerian flag as well. In addition, as has been the case for the past number of years, Bethel's African-American Alumni Association presented every African-American graduate with a multi-colored Kente cloth stole.

In her commencement address entitled "Serious Fun," Janine Wedel, a social anthropologist and a professor of public policy at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., said life lessons can be learned from pranks.

"What I remember most is Bethel College's common lore," Wedel said. "The shared stories, many of which center around pranks on campus over the years. Cows have been known to visit the library. Cars appeared on top of buildings. Dining hall chairs have gone missing until finally discovered on a roof after weeks of us eating while sitting on the floor."

She said pranks reflect the community's sense of trust, require flexibility, creativity, teamwork, demonstrate a sense of adventure and curiosity, and indicate willingness to question rules and upend the "natural order."—*Melanie Zuercher*

Note: See our May 20 issue for coverage of commencement exercises at the other five Mennonite Church USA colleges, universities and seminary.

Shuffleboard

Retirement is not all fun and games – it can be fun work.

Our free booklet, *Your enough,* can help you plan for a constructive retirement. Call us or visit our Web site today for your copy. Build something special.

(800) 348-7468, Ext. 202
www.mma-online.org

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

© 2007 Mennonite Mutual Aid

Global Church Congregations begins

Mennonite World Conference unveils congregational partnership program.

Mennonite World Conference is unveiling a new way for individual congregations of MWC member churches to participate in and be supportive of the global church and MWC.

Called Global Church Congregations (GCC), this new initiative had its "trial run" at the 2006 General Council meetings in Pasadena, Calif.

For the Pasadena gathering, a dozen congregations—all of them from North America—made financial contributions to the MWC travel fund, sent participants to the General Council meetings and agreed to host delegates from churches in other countries after the Pasadena meetings.

GCC is again operating in connection with MWC's Assembly 15 in Asunción, Paraguay. Instead of just for North American churches, the goal is for at least 30 congregations from throughout the world to participate. A key feature of the program will be the pairing of congregations from different parts of the world to work together to:

establish a congregational communication and prayer link with each other and with MWC;

send a delegate from each congregation to MWC gatherings as possible;

study one "Anabaptist Shelf" book selection;

agree upon and make an annual per member contribution to MWC according to MWC's fair share formula.

A gathering of GCC representatives present at the Paraguay assembly is being planned by MWC. However, it is hoped that the program will be largely self-administered with congregational pairs making use of each other's gifts to resolve problems and meet challenges, said Tim Lind, church-to-church relations coordinator.

Administrative leadership for the GCC program will be provided by MWC staff from Democratic Republic of Congo.

GCC is seen as a natural continuation of MWC's emphasis on global gift sharing.

While it is not intended to be primarily a "sister congregation" program, GCC will allow congregations from different cultures to discern together how they can both participate more fully in the work of the global community through the sharing of gifts.

Application forms are available at www.mwc-cmm.org.—*Mennonite World Conference*

the value and values of a goshen education

Unique core values
Goshen's Christ-centered core values are passionate learning, global citizenship, compassionate peacemaking and servant leadership.

Educational value
More than 60 excellent programs of study, with internships and research for undergrads and visionary study abroad opportunities.

Financial value
Our graduates typically leave with less debt than the national average; 99 percent of students receive financial assistance, for an average package of $17,555.

Find out more about Goshen at www.goshen.edu

MCC Central States responds to ICE raid

Mennonite Central Committee provides $1,000 to help affected families.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Central States is responding to a May 12 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid at Agriprocessors meatpacking plant in Postville, Iowa.

In the raid, 389 workers without documentation of citizenship or other legal status were captured and detained. ICE had a caravan of buses ready to cart the people away to the National Cattle Congress in Waterloo, Iowa, for processing. Many children were left without parents, businesses have shut down and it is unknown what the future holds for this small town in northeast Iowa. Two churches and the school in Postville have become safe sanctuaries for people who had a family member taken in the raid.

Saulo Padilla, MCC U.S. director for the office on immigration, said, "The church has the call to welcome the stranger and proclaim that any division between immigrant and native is erased; there are no borders or boundaries for us as followers of Jesus. When institutions and agencies side with the powers of the world, the church is called to side with the oppressed, the poor, stranger and the marginalized. If we fail to do this, we fail to be the church."

MCC Central States is providing $1,000 to help cover housing and food costs for families affected by the raid through Cedar Falls Mennonite Church in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

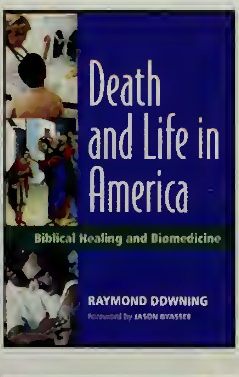
Susan Janzen, pastor, said, "Our faith in Jesus Christ and commitment to following after him compels us to stand in solidarity with the people of Postville and the other immigrant populations in our community. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus tells us that on judgment day God will ask us how we treated and welcomed the strangers among us. How we respond to 'the least of these,' which in our context includes the immigrants detained in this raid and their families, is a sign of our faithfulness to God."

MCC Central States encourages individuals and congregations to write letters to their U.S. congressional representative and senators.

For a sample letter and more information on immigration from MCC please visit mcc.org/centralstates/iceraid.—*Tina Schrag of Mennonite Central Committee Central States*

> **The church has the call to welcome the stranger and proclaim that any division between immigrant and native is erased.**
> **—Saulo Padilla**

New June Releases from Herald Press


Death and Life in America
Biblical Healing and Biomedicine
RAYMOND DOWNING
Foreword by JASON BYASSEE

Death and Life in America: Biblical Healing and Biomedicine

"Raymond Downing's book fills a void by offering a sustained and well-argued theological reflection on the nature and use of medical technology as practiced in the United States. His book is important because most of these issues continue to go unrecognized by the vast majority of Christians. Christians in medicine and pastors would especially benefit in thinking through these vital health-related issues that effect everyone."

—*Michael Balboni, Director of the Institute of Faith & Medicine*

Paper, 160 pages, $15.99

Sing the Story 2
Kenneth Nafziger

Sing the Story 2 CD

Kenneth Nafziger and the Story Musicians

The music featured here is based on the book, *Sing the Story*. The music embraces the heart of our worship and devotion: Jesus Christ. The selections especially focus on the seasons of the church year from Advent to Pentecost, telling the story of Jesus.

CD, $15.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

CALENDAR

Charlottesville Mennonite Church (Va.) ***50th anniversary celebration***, Sept. 6-7, contact 434- 293-8306 or pastorcmc@embarqmail.com.

WORKERS

Watkins, Kim Litwiller, was licensed as youth pastor at Hopedale Mennonite Church, Hopedale, Ill., on May 4.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Aeschliman, Creighton David, May 18, to Chad and Nikki Rutter Aeschliman, Wauseon, Ohio.

Barker, Zane Nathan, May 22, to Nathaniel and Denise Zimmerman Barker, Beaver Falls, N.Y.

Bomberger, Bizayehu John, born Nov. 20, 1999. Received for adoption on Feb. 20 by Rohrer and Arloa Bontrager Bomberger, Goshen, Ind.

Cherry, Elijah David, May 2, to Stefan Cherry and Pascale Tranchemontagne, Guelph, Ontario.

Dirks, Margarita "Rita" Ella, Feb. 27, to Thaine Dirks and Judy Lapham, Minneapolis, Minn.

Doehrmann, Katelyn Rae, April 29, to Adam and Lindsay Short Doehrmann, Olathe, Kan.

Funnell, Michael David, April 14, to Tad and Glenda Stuckey Funnell, Stryker, Ohio.

Harrison, Mariella Rose, March 3, to Jason and Rhiannon Checchio Harrison, Goshen, Ind.

Hess, Lucy Beatrix, March 29, to Doug Miller and Lali Hess, Indianapolis, Ind.

Jantzi, Valerie Lynn Phelps, May 15, to Terry Jantzi and Elizabeth Phelps, Harrisonburg, Va.

Johnston Moriichi, Micah Jeeho, May 8, to Shuji Moriichi and Ruth Johnston, Minneapolis, Minn.

Kennel, Caleb Owen, Feb. 22, to Kurt and Betty Lew Kennel, Rochester, N.Y.

Kohorst, Milly Spring, Feb. 27, to Justin and Sarah Kissinger Kohorst, Rochester, N.Y.

Montague, Addison Marie, April 8, to Dan and Amanda Montague, Stryker, Ohio.

Perrone, Lydia Joy, May 29, to B.J. and Seline Perrone, Landisville, Pa.

Rupp, Ella Grace, May 2, to Rick and Jennifer Holtz Rupp, Middlebury, Ind.

Unzicker, Elena Marie, April 7, to Tom and Andrea Bontrager Unzicker, Indianapolis, Ind.

MARRIAGES

Glanzer/Kauffman: Monte Glanzer, Harrisonburg, Va., and Luella Kauffman, Harrisonburg, May 17, at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Hartman/Hoover: Dwight Hartman, Harrisonburg, Va., and Pearl Hoover, Harrisonburg, May 25, at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

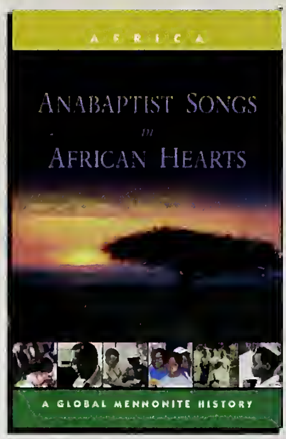
Keiser/Swartley: Debra Keiser, Pioneer, Ohio, and Matthew Swartley, Harrisonburg, Va., May 24, at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Martin/Van Esch: Travis Martin, Elmira, Ontario, and Janet Van Esch, Elmira, May 24, at Floradale Mennonite Church, Elmira.

Shantz/Wideman: Jeffrey Shantz, Wellesley, Ontario, and Kimberly Wideman, St. Jacobs, Ontario, May 10, at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Towns/Weber: Mike Towns, Elmira, Ontario, and Jeanette Weber, Elmira, April 19, at Floradale Mennonite Church, Elmira.

OUR STORIES CONNECT US TO EACH OTHER!


AFRICA
ANABAPTIST SONGS in AFRICAN HEARTS
A GLOBAL MENNONITE HISTORY

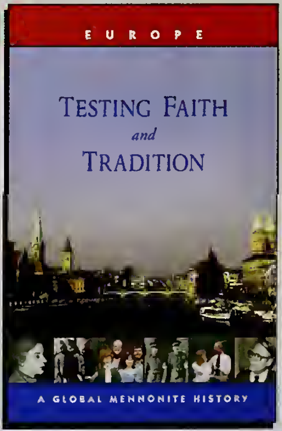
5½ x 8½ • 292 pages
$11.95, paperback
Group discounts available

The Anabaptist movement had its beginning in scattered places throughout Europe during the 16th century. Now there are more Mennonites in Africa than on any other continent.

Today Anabaptist-descended Mennonite churches in Europe are declining in membership, but they are not without reinvigorated faith and hope. ***Testing Faith and Tradition*** finds renewal and promise while surviving centuries of conflict, dislocation, emigration.

Anabaptist Songs in African Hearts demonstrates that God's work is established through faith and trusting, more than through dollars and cents. Each writer is an African church leader or pastor, writing about the emergence of the church in the countries from which they come.

"The goal of the Global Mennonite History series is to nurture a sense of belonging together, to promote mutual understanding, and to stimulate renewal and extension of Anabaptist Christianity worldwide."
— John A. Lapp and C. Arnold Snyder, General Editors, Mennonite World Conference



5½ x 8½ • 324 pages
$11.95, paperback
Group discounts available

Good Books®

At local bookstores or directly from the publisher.
Call toll-free **800/762-7171** • P.O. Box 419, Intercourse, PA 17534 • **www.GoodBooks.com**
Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and AmEx accepted. Shipping/Handling, add 10% ($3.00 minimum).

DEATHS

Bowman, Grace Ilene Shantz, 98, St. Jacobs, Ontario, died March 28. Spouse: Solomon Bowman (deceased). Parents: Uzziah and Lydia Ann Shantz. Children: Ruth Ann Sauder; one grandchild; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 2 at Floradale Mennonite Church, Elmira, Ontario.

Brenner, William E., 84, Wooster, Ohio, died May 18. Spouse: Ida Mae McFadden Yoder Brenner. Spouse: Ruth L. Hartzler Brenner (deceased). Spouse: Edna Nussbaum Brenner (deceased). Parents: Herman and Erma Brenneman Brenner. Children: Marlin Brenner, Marla Mast, Marian Beeler; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; two step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 22 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Chupp, Wayne Ray, 61, Nappanee, Ind., died May 23 of cancer. Spouse: Joan Stauffer Chupp. Parents: Ray E. and Ada M. Yoder Chupp. Children: Eric, Jeremy; one grandchild. Funeral: May 27 at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee.

Dalke, Ferdinand Menno, 95, Aberdeen , Idaho, died May 13. Spouse: Helen Brucks Dalke. Parents: Henry and Anna Mathies Dalke. Children: Delos, Karen Dirks, Nancy Clark; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 19 at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen.

Duerksen, H. Bernice Unrau, 87, Inman, Kan., died April 29. Spouse: Mildor F. Duerksen (deceased). Parents: Henry Band Unrau and Elisabeth Schroeder Unrau. Children: Larry, Merle, John, Brian; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 29 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.

Flickinger, Teresa Kliewer, 17, Indianapolis, Ind., died May 14. Parents: Ron Flickinger and Colleen Kliewer. Siblings: Martin Flickinger. Funeral: First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

Godshall, Elmer K., 89, Telford, Pa., died May 20. Spouse: Marian Moyer Godshall. Parents: William and Sallie Koffel Godshall. Children: Arlen, Larry, Ray, Darlene Knox, E. Durrell, Lori Detweiler; 12 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 27 at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Horst, Ida Gladys Eshleman, 94, Hesston, Kan., died May 19. Spouse: Clarence A. Horst (deceased). Parents: Adam and Cora Grove Eshleman. Children: Ruby Sawin, Twila Van Rossun, Don, Roy, Delmar; nine grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 23 at Schowalter Villa Chapel, Hesston.

Hughes, Marcus Andrew, 17, Bluffton, Ohio, died May 26 of a brain aneurysm. Parents: Donald Hughes, Susan Burkholder Collier and Everett Collier. Step-siblings: Cody Routson, Joshua Routson, Ciara Routson, Ashley Gratz-Collier, Alee Gratz-Collier. Funeral: June 2 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Kempf, Mary Ellen, 68, Fayette, Ohio, died April 17 of injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Spouse: Darrel Kempf. Parents: Robert and Edna Blough Eash. Children: Rhonda Kempf, Michael, Brian, Scott; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 22 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

King, Dale, 90, Archbold, Ohio, died May 17. Spouse: Lucille Leichty King (deceased). Parents: Henry and Ida Weber King. Children: Dale Eugene, Barbara Dabit, Donna Kauffman, Cheryl Cron; six grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 20 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Jacobs, Merle E., 89, Smithville, Ohio, died April 9, Spouse: Elizabeth Beyeler Jacobs. Parents: Paul Anthony and Emma Trella Risch Jacobs. Funeral: April 12 at Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.

Johnson, Ilene Louise, 69, Perryton, Texas, died Feb. 25. Parents: Floyd Merl and Lulu Johnson. Funeral: March 1 at Perryton Mennonite Church.

Martin, Norene Bauman, 72, Elmira, Ontario, died April 14 of cancer. Spouse: Mahlon M. Martin. Parents: Emerson and Luida Bauman. Children: Sharon Martin, Ron; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 18 at Floradale Mennonite Church, Elmira.

Nickel, John W., 86, Mountain Lake, Minn., died May 29. Spouse: Edna Marie Schroeder Nickel. Parents: William T. and Maria Friesen Nickel. Children: Dorothy Friesen, Daryl, Audrey Bjerum; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 2 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake.

Reschly, Clara Elizabeth Wittrig Cannon, 91, Washington, Iowa, died May 11. Spouse: Floyd Reschly (deceased). Spouse: Charles Cannon (deceased). Parents: Howard L. and Elizabeth A. Swift Wittrig. Children: Matt Cannon, Lynn Rew; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 13 in Washington.

Schrock, Paul C., 85, Middlebury, Ind., died April 25. Spouse: Dorcas Graber Schrock. Parents: Edd and Fannie Yoder Schrock. Children: Marlin Schrock, Shawn Schrock, Stephen Schrock, Chris Dyer, Brent Dyer; six grandchildren. Funeral: April 29 at Bonneville Mennonite Church, Bristol, Ind.

Shankland, Valerie Anne Wilmott, 71, Indianapolis, Ind., died Feb. 8 of a pulmonary embolism. Spouse: Paul Shankland. Child: Megan Gillispie; one granddaughter. Funeral: Feb. 14 at First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

Sommer, Frances Miller, 89, Bluffton, Ohio, died May 18. Spouse: Ralph I. Sommer (deceased). Parents: Roy and Myrna Walter Miller. Children: Philip, Jonathan, Mark, Rebecca Ahmed; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Suderman, Richard E., 79, Inman, Kan., died May 25. Spouse: Mildred Frey Suderman. Parents: Herman H. and Edna Ensz Suderman. Children: Cheryl Wiens, Debra Whitermore, Deann Wiggers; four grandchildren. Funeral: May 28 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Zehr, Ruth Elenora Lais, 84, Goshen, Ind., died May 20. Spouse: John David Zehr (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Ellen Egli Lais. Children: Joan Link, Dianne Schaefer; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 24 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

Sales: Insurance and financial services

Combine your professional skills and your Christian faith values

MMA®

Stewardship Solutions

MMA, an established, church-related organization, is seeking sales professionals to provide insurance and financial solutions to one of the industry's most loyal markets.

MMA is a highly trusted organization serving individuals and businesses primarily associated with Mennonite and other Anabaptist-related denominations. Excellent income potential and generous benefits. To learn more, visit www.mma-online.org/careers. Fax or e-mail resume to (574) 537-6635 or hr@mma-online.org.

Hively Avenue Mennonite Church Anniversary. If you ever were a part of **HAMC, Elkhart, Ind.**, please join us as we celebrate our 50th anniversary Oct. 4-5. For more information, visit www.mysite.verizon.net/hivelymenno. RSVP to 574-294-3423 or hivelymenno@verizon.net.

Hinkletown Mennonite School is seeking a ***middle school math teacher*** for the '08-'09 school year. Applicants must have bachelor's degree, preferably in math or elementary education. Contact Kathy Stoltzfus at kstoltzfus@hmsk8.org or send resumé to Hinkletown Mennonite School, 272 Wanner Road, Ephrata, PA 17522.

Penn View Christian School is seeking two enthusiastic ***full-time middle school (grades 6th-8th) teachers*** beginning in the 2008-09 school year: science, social studies. Penn View offers a Christ-centered, academically excellent education for 615 students in early childhood through 8th grade. Please visit our Web site at www.pennview.org for general information about the school and a professional application. Please send your resumé and completed application to Stephen Schrag, Middle School Principal, Penn View Christian School, 420 Godshall Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 215-723-1196; emails may be sent to sschrag@pennview.org.

Mennonite youth pastor, full-time position. For job description and congregational information form contact: Jim Cashdollar, **First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.**; 309-696-1943.

Pastor needed: **Mountain Community Mennonite Church**, located in Palmer Lake, Colo., is looking for a ***full-time pastor***. We are a small church in the Mountain States Conference located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. See our Web site at www.mcmcpl.org. For more information, please contact our conference minister: Herm Weaver at 303-258-7589.

Hinkletown Mennonite School, a K-8 Christian school, is seeking a ***full-time administrator/director of development*** position available July 2008. This chief executive position is responsible for the daily operations of the school as well as strategic planning and budgeting. Responsibilities include fund-raising, capital campaign, recruitment and donor relations. Supervision of teachers is provided by a full-time principal. Excellent communication and relational skills are required. A bachelor's degree in education or administration is preferred. Email resumé to boardchair@hmsk8.org or mail to: Roy Hoover, 668 South Kinzer Ave., New Holland, PA 17557; 717-354-7100.

Coming to **Montreal** for school or vacation? Support a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada project while enjoying Montreal's trendy "Plateau" district by staying at ***Maison de l'amitié Summer Guestrooms and Student residence.*** Student housing available for September. 514-843-4356, www.residencema.ca reservations@maisondelamitie.ca.

The **Salem Mennonite Church**, located near the growing community of Tofield, Alberta (45 minutes Southeast of Edmonton), is seeking a ***lead pastor*** to minister to our congregation of 125 people. The successful candidate will have previous pastoral experience and/or a bachelor of theology degree or equivalent. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications. Interested people should forward their resumés to: Carla Fendelet, secretary, Salem Mennonite Church, Box 56, Tofield, Alberta T0B 4J0; fax: 780-662-0106; email: salemchurch@live.ca.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Go ahead –
raise the roof

MMA
Stewardship Solutions

Building a ministry sometimes means new construction. Or maybe a refinanced loan at a lower rate could free more money for your ministry. Either way, we can help.

Check with MMA first if you're thinking about a construction loan, a standard first mortgage loan, or refinancing. You'll find competitive rates, experienced personnel – and no hassles. Plus, your lenders are fellow church members. Another good example of how MMA provides stewardship solutions to the Anabaptist community.

MMA's first mortgage church loan rates:

5-year adjustable rate	**6.00%***
3-year adjustable rate	**5.50%***
1-year adjustable rate	**4.75%***

For a free information kit, contact the church mortgage loan department at (800) 348-7468.

*Rates effective June 1, 2008, and are subject to change on a monthly basis. There will be a 1 percent premium on construction loans during the construction period.

timely tip:
Practice bicycle safety!
Goodville Mutual

New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business. Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

TheMennonite

Reading someone else's copy?

It's easy to subscribe online at **www.themennonite.org** or by calling **1-800-790-2498**.

Worship coordinator: **Marietta Community Chapel** is seeking coordinator for music and other creative ministries. This role (eight hrs/week) includes leadership of contemporary worship team. Contact Cliff Hershey, 717-285-7682 or moocrew@mindspring.com. Web site: www.mariettachapel.org.

Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference seeks applicants and nominations for ***lead conference minister*** (LCM). Responsibilities and qualifications are described on the conference Web site: http://im.mennonite.net. Applicants should submit a letter of interest and a completed Ministerial Leadership Information form (available through the Mennonite Church USA Web site: http://www.mennoniteusa.org/MLI/default.asp) to Search Committee, c/o Don Garber, 65975 State Road 15, Goshen, IN 46526. The successful applicant will be ordained or able to be ordained and have pastoral or other leadership experience. Remuneration will be commensurate for the level of responsibility and experience. Candidates from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups and women are encouraged to apply. Send nominations to the above address or complete a nomination form online: www.logiforms.com//formdata/user_forms/18609_3637576/61901/ Applications will be reviewed beginning July 15. The position will remain open until filled. Start date is negotiable, although the goal is for this person to begin by Jan. 1, 2009. Direct questions to Don Garber: 574-533-0121 or donwg@juno.com.

Administrative assistant: full-time position open immediately at **Spruce Lake Retreat**, a multifaceted Christian retreat center in northeastern Pennsylvania (member, Mennonite Camping Association). Applicant must be a self-starter with excellent working habits, organizational and writing skills, experience in data management, HR and Microsoft Office Suite. Excellent medical benefits and Christ-centered work environment. Contact executive director: phone, 800-822-7505, ext. 113; fax: 570-595-0328; (www.sprucelake.org).

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"**As a Bible professor and director of peace and conflict studies at Bluffton University, I have the opportunity to emphasize and live out in the classroom the Mennonite values of close attention to scripture and nonviolent action.** I love reading the Bible with students and thinking about how Jesus' teachings ask all of his disciples to be peacemakers. It is exciting to see students take Jesus' call seriously for their own lives as they are making decisions about what sorts of people they will be in the world."

– Laura Brenneman, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion and director of peace and conflict studies

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

The avatar goes to church

Anna Groff

When I heard there are churches in the online virtual world, Second Life, my jaw dropped—although not as far as the other jaws in the room.

Phyllis Tickle, founding editor of the religion department at *Publisher's Weekly*, told the audience at the Associated Church Press convention in Dallas on April 21 that several mainline denominations have online presences in Second Life.

Second Life is an internet-based, 3-D virtual world constantly evolving by the work of its millions of users. It launched in 2003. Since technology is constantly changing, it is only getting more difficult to draw a line between what is appropriate and what is not. In Second Life one creates an avatar—the computer's representation of the user. This avatar can look like you, or nothing like you. In Second Life you direct your avatar around the virtual world to text chat and gesture to other avatars. A monetary system in Second Life allows users to build and create.

> This same lack of inhibition leads people to ask questions about God they would not normally feel comfortable exploring.
> —Bobby Gruenewald

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

I logged on to Second Life last month. After creating my avatar, I tried searching for these churches I had heard about. However, I could not get past the "trial stage" (instructions for how to manipulate the avatar). I knew after about 20 minutes that this is not for me—at least for now.

But, regardless of how my first, quick experience with Second Life went, I must acknowledge that Second Life may be life-giving for others—and perhaps a place where they discover church life and theology.

In Second Life there are churches: Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and more. LifeChurch.tv, a Christian church headquartered in Oklahoma, has campuses in Second Life. In these virtual meetings, users experience audio sermons, discussion forums and worship. The hidden and anonymous identity of a user's avatar plays a key role in the way users interact with Second Life churches.

Pastor of LifeChurch.tv, Bobby Gruenewald, writes, "What I have found so far is that there are definitely people in Second Life who simply want to hide behind their avatar and say/do things they normally would not say/do in real life. However, it is this same lack of inhibition that leads people to ask questions about God they would not normally feel comfortable exploring in real life. Creating an avatar becomes a very nonthreatening [sic] way for people to explore more about God."

While this makes sense, virtual church probably feels like too much of a jump for many of us. But it is best to not react too strongly to these new—somewhat startling—ways of seeking faith. Instead let's try to learn, listen and understand why this is appealing to so many people.

Richelle Wiseman, director of the Centre for Faith and the Media, told those gathered at the Associated Church Press convention about her daughter's reliance on several social networking sites. I had to think about *how* Wiseman told the group: she stated the fact with no judgment or qualification—or even slight roll of the eyes.

We must model Wiseman's careful openmindedness when learning about new technologies, or we risk only further separating ourselves from people curious about faith. But staying neutral is not easy. When we do not understand a technology or use it regularly ourselves, it is difficult to grasp how other people could dedicate hours of their life to it. This goes for texting, instant messaging, interactive games, blogging and much more.

Remember, it is all relative: Friends older than I teasingly brag about how they wrote hand-written love letters in college—not emails like my generation. We have to get used to the idea that things change, sometimes more quickly than we realize.

It is most important to work at understanding why people use technology, as opposed to making judgment calls.

FILMS

In **Lars and the Real Girl** (PG-13, on DVD), when Lars—a distant and awkward young man—purchases a life-sized sex doll to be his girlfriend, his family, friends and church step in to help. When Lars introduces the doll to the community, they follow the doctor's advice and decide to treat the doll like a real person in order to understand his bizarre delusion. Lars, impressively played by Ryan Gosling, learns what true love is through these supportive actions. The film challenges viewers to consider how they would respond to a similar delusion. Through hilarious and touching moments, it demonstrates how to truly stand by someone in need. *—Anna Groff*

FILMS

Sex and the City (R, in theaters), a continuation of the HBO television show, packs in an overwhelming amount of fashion, love and fights. The four female characters—who turn 40 and 50 in the film—reveal what true friendship means by standing by each other through family problems, infertility and infidelity. But realistically the women's love for each other is not perfect—with secrets kept and forgiveness begged for. Unfortunately, the constant consumption of better apartments, better shoes and bigger closets prevails. Unlike the television show, criticized by many for the characters' promiscuous lifestyles, the film is more about getting "stuff" than love or sex.*—Anna Groff*

Continued from page 5.

It is good that Christians working in science are willing to explain that science does not threaten their faith, but it is important that they make a clear distinction between conclusions based on scientific research and those based on faith convictions.—*Arden Slotter, Castle Rock, Colo.*

Learning from Mary

While I found much to appreciate and affirm in Linda Gehman Peachey's article, "Learning from Mary" (May 6), I take issue with the inferences she draws from the 1995 Personal Responsibility bill. The bill, according to Peachey states, "the higher the incidence of single-parent families in a neighborhood, the higher the incidence of violent crime and burglary."

I take issue with Peachey's logic. If there is blame (and I think there is), I and most people I know would put the blame on the absent parent, not on the one who is doing her best to raise her children by herself. By God's grace, Mary was not a single parent. Joseph accepted and admirably carried out the very difficult role of adoptive parent to God's son.—*Elvina Martens, Goshen, Ind.*

Liberalize trade for "food justice"

In "The Food Crisis" (May 20), Everett J. Thomas quotes Church World Service: "Enough food exists to feed the world's hungry; the problem is that much of the world's poor can't afford food in their local markets." This statement is then followed by a list of suggestions for Mennonites to "inject some justice" into the food crisis.

I propose adding advocacy of trade liberalization in agriculture to the list. A fairly recent International Monetary Fund study, among others, estimates that if industrial countries alone opened their markets to imported agricultural goods, developing country welfare would rise by more than $10 billion. The additional elimination of agricultural subsidies in industrial countries would probably on balance also "inject justice" but would have a more mixed impact on developing countries since the impact of eliminating the subsidies would be to raise the price of food—generally helping developing countries that are food exporters and harming, at least initially, those that are net food importers.

Granted, this is complex and all economic change has positive impact for some and negative impact for others. But the potential for helping the poor here is enormously greater than, say, "purchasing wild-caught and local seafood" or "eating organic foods," and maybe greater than all the items on the list combined.—*Emil Kreider, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Virginia Mennonite influenced 1969 hymnal

I was grateful for Harold D. Lehman's response to "Using Hymn Number '606'" (May 20). Joseph Funk's *Genuine Church Music*, 1832, named *Harmonia Sacra* in later editions, played an important role in the creation of *The Mennonite Hymnal* in 1969—not only for "Dedication Anthem" at number 606 but also for its several dozen American folk tunes, such as Foundation, Zion's Pilgrim and Amazing Grace. The Joint Hymnal Committee for that book attended the Harmonia Sacra Singing at Weavers Mennonite Church near Harrisonburg, Va., on New Year's Day of 1964. The experience easily convinced us to include a number of those musical treasures in the new book.

In addition, I acknowledge my indebtedness to generations of Shenandoah Valley Mennonites for keeping alive the traditions of singing in parts with shape notes—a gift that came to the wider church in North America long before the rather sudden popularity of "606" in Turner, Ore., in 1969.—*Mary Oyer, Goshen, Ind.*

Editor's note: Oyer tells us that the correct word is "shape" notes and not "shaped" notes.

Churches need fences

Jane Yoder-Short's article, "Putting in Fences" (May 6) rang a bell with me. After listening to some interviews with people who are attracted to the cults and isms of our day and reading a sizable research report from three sociologists, the real reason for decline seems clear: Particularly children of the baby boomers want fences. Some said they like groups that know what they believe and set standards to follow. The researchers said the major denominations dropped their last requirements for membership in the '50s and '60s, and there is little attraction to belong to a group that doesn't live any differently from those who don't belong. We know that when children don't know where the fences are, they become very insecure. So churches that have fences—in keeping with Jane Short-Yoder's guidelines—provide security and a sense of direction and belonging "beyond the chaotic dominions of our world."—*John M. Drescher, Quakertown, Pa.*

Do you publish all the letters you receive?

Readers often ask this question. The answer: We publish about 95 percent of the letters we receive but not all of every letter (some are too long). We may decline to publish a letter that is from a frequent letter-writer (when constrained by space). We also may decline to publish letters that are about matters we deem irrelevant to our readers. See the policies at right.—*Editor*

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

*************************CAR-RT LOT**C-02362021 884
62021 884 15-DEC-09 66994 35 32
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

Relationships, behaviors, organization

On Jan. 26, top leaders of our denomination said of the 7-year-old Mennonite Church USA, "Our vision and call to engage in God's purposes in the world is not adequately supported by our present relationships, behaviors and organization."

The Executive Board followed up this statement in March with a proposal to create one communication system, one funding system and one integrated board of directors for the agencies and entities that currently comprise our national church structure.

Since then, readers have been commenting on the plan in Readers Say, and denominational leaders have been promoting or critiquing the plan on page 18. (That page alternates between "Leadership" and "Speaking Out.")

Why might an integrated, simplified and centralized board be a good idea?

The reason used by some is "branding." The assumption is that if we can increase the "brand identity" of Mennonite Church USA, members and congregations will develop even stronger "brand loyalty."

Such marketing language doesn't seem very churchly or holy. But there is another way to say it: In order for Mennonite Church USA congregations to retain the distinctives that are part of our Anabaptist—and cultural—traditions, certain characteristics must be strengthened. We want congregations to hire ministers that have been trained in our seminaries. We want parents to send their children to Mennonite schools. We want congregations and individuals to participate in the work of Mennonite missions. We want congregations to use curricula produced by our publisher. We want members to invest their retirement funds in programs that practice good stewardship.

If congregations and areas conferences can work in a coordinated manner toward all these things, then we will have a better chance of strengthening the unique voice God has given us as one small but influential part of the global, Christian church.

Bringing everyone together in a fair and equitable way could improve our relationships, behaviors and organization. But the debate will center on how to bring all the segments together.

An integrated, simplified and centralized system is a good idea, but it is not necessary to dismiss all current board members who have been serving selflessly on the seven boards affected. In the box (below), I offer an idea that could let us go in the direction the Executive Board is leading—and take nearly everyone along.—*ejt*

If we can work in a coordinated manner, we will have a better chance of strengthening the unique voice God has given us.

An aggregate board

A March 16 statement released by Mennonite Church USA's Executive Board proposes to do away with the separate boards governing various denominational agencies and create one board to lead the national church structure. Here is a proposal for doing so:

Put together all Mennonite Church USA board members currently serving on churchwide boards and create one large aggregate board. Let this large board meet twice each year with part of the meeting in plenary and part of the meeting focused on the discreet mandates of each agency. It may sound ungainly, but this is almost exactly what will happen June 20-21 in Columbus, Ohio, at an all-boards meeting called to review the Executive Board's proposal. This meeting could serve as a template for a new, simplified governance structure.

Former General Conference Mennonite Church members may say such an aggregate looks like the old Council of Commissions. But this organization would be different. The aggregate board would be charged with the good of the whole—then meet in separate sessions as committees to address their areas of responsibility. The CEOs of current agencies could serve as vice presidents to a president or CEO who manages the whole.

The Executive Board and its top staff have said they may not have the expertise to be and lead the kind of integrated board they envision. I agree. That is why it makes sense to move toward an integrated board that values and incorporates the expertise and commitment that already resides in the gifts and convictions of current board members.—*ejt*

Note: The next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated July 8, 2008.

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

July 8, 2008

urgency and patience

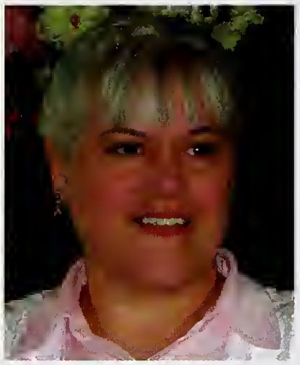
Page 8

12 Passionate (not angry) peacemakers

14 The wounds of war

32 Small summit in Canada

Many gifts, many people



Donna Mast is co-pastor of Scottdale (Pa.) Mennonite Church

She loves church and would attend every church activity if she could, but she is dependent upon the generosity of others to provide a ride. By human standards, her mind is not as mature as her body. It never will be. She lacks social finesse and her body moves awkwardly. But she is the most loving of human beings. She has an amazing ability to remember people's names and the important details of other's lives. She uses this gift of remembering to connect with others and, as she does, one can't help but feel cared for by this little woman whom many would overlook.

"Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving. There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church" (1 Corinthians 12:4-7 NLT).

He is dirty and smelly. A combination of mental illness and alcohol often leave him in such a fog that people worry how he will interrupt the worship service each week. But when he opens his mouth to sing there is nothing foggy about the clear tenor that erupts in joyous praise to his maker. His singing voice lifts the spirits of those around him and when he stops singing, it seems like a little bit of heaven lingers in the air.

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:4-7 NRSV).

He is disorganized and unconventional. If his items make it into the church bulletin, they have arrived at the last minute. More often than not, he needs to announce what he'd intended to have printed because he has missed the secretary's deadline for bulletin items. His announcements are difficult for the older folks to follow, because his thoughts fail to flow in a straightforward manner. But he has a heart for God and a heart for the youth of the congregation. No one can demonstrate God's love or communicate God's words to the youth any better than he and they love him dearly.

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:4-7 NIV).

She is shy and would prefer not to be noticed. She rarely speaks up in any class or meeting and when she does, her words are stuttered and halting. Few know her well and even fewer seek her out. But if someone has a question about God's creation, she is the one to ask. She knows how to care for the rhododendron and what attracts the wrens. During the spring and summer months, her garden feeds many more mouths than those of her family. In the fall she blesses others with apples from her trees. And in the winter, she often spends her time baking so that she has something to share with the elderly neighbor down the street.

Thank you, God, for varieties of gifts poured into varieties of people, each one created in your image. Open my eyes to see you in each one, particularly in those with whom I have difficulty. Amen. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

TheMennonite

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Vol. 11, No. 13, July 8, 2008

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412 894 8705
fax: 412-363-1216

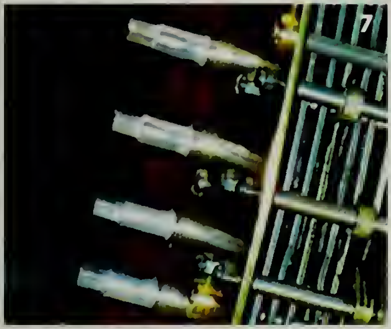
The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN
JUL 12 '08


7

6

8

16

8 **Urgency and patience**
In the tension between urgency and patience, the challenge is to know when it's time for which.—*Steve Dintaman*

12 **Passionate (not angry) peacemakers**
How we can work constructively for peace while we are furious with the behavior of our own government—*David Brubaker*

14 **The wounds of war**
A call to welcome combat veterans who are paralyzed with shame and terrors of the soul—*Carolyn Holderread Heggen*

16 **May peace prevail**—*Tara Michelle Gerber*

19 **MCC board confronts 'dissatisfaction'**
Mennonite Central Committee hopes for new organization plan by 2009—*Meetinghouse*

20 **All-boards meeting looks at proposal**
Most Mennonite Church USA agencies ask Executive Board to "slow down."—*Anna Groff*

21 **Executive Board defers one-board idea**
Deferral is contingent on "alternative route" and progress towards goal.—*Marathana Prothro*

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Grace and truth**
Many gifts, many people—*Donna Mast*

4 **Readers say**

6 **News digest**

18 **Speaking out**
About waterboarding, Mr. President—*Gene Stoltzfus*

24 **For the record**

30 **Real families**
Extraordinary every day—*Gerald Shenk*

32 **Editorial**
Small summit in Canada—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Photo illustration using child fishing by Steve Simzer | Dreamstime.com

No solid ground yet
I think it was Lyle Schaller who planted in my mind the idea that change agents should not tear down the old house before living in the new house for a time. I accept that advice as wise and affirm the back page editorial (June 11) that suggests an aggregate board instead of the radical restructuring being tested by the Mennonite Church.

As I read and listen it seems apparent that the church has not reached a satisfying consensus. That in itself suggests caution. In the box on the editorial page, the last paragraph reports that the Executive Board and its top staff have said they may not have the expertise to be and lead the kind of integrated board they envision. The hesitancy indicates that the Executive Board and staff may have the good sense to resign, if their plan for restructure is implemented.

However, another matter could be more worrisome. Motives can be suspect when those at the top of an organizational pyramid hastily gather authority unto themselves. Doubts could be dispelled if it became clear that the top denominational executives will not benefit from the restructuring they propose.

Many years ago, after watching Mennonites struggle with decision-making for a day in Miami, a Haitian said that he had learned something about Mennonites. They move slowly, he said, but when they put their foot down it is on solid ground. The denomination has not yet found solid ground for the next step forward.—*Martin Lehman, Goshen, Ind.*

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Goals for restructuring
I greatly appreciated Everett Thomas' June 17 editorial, "Relationships, Behaviors, Organization." Whatever organizational changes are implemented, the words that should serve as Mennonite Church USA's guide are what Thomas wrote: "We want congregations to hire ministers that have been trained in our seminaries. We want parents to send their children to Mennonite schools. We want congregations and individuals to participate in the work of Mennonite missions. We want congregations to use curricula produced by our publisher. We want members to invest their retirement funds in programs that practice good stewardship."

Thomas' words are the goals that should be central to any reorganization. Anything less is a total waste of time and energy.—*J.B. Miller, Indianapolis*

Let go and let God
Regarding the proposed restructuring of Mennonite Church USA, I have several thoughts to share:

Our challenge is not too many boards and people living their gifts, but one of "overgovernance." This model fits in the Kingdom of Christ from my experience. My eight years on the Goshen (Ind.) College board are filled with wonderful memories and relationships, growth and trust, and personal caring within that group. What a wonderful way to be nourished and fed.

We need more people involved, not fewer.

Each of our institutions needs people outside the circle of the day-to-day work routine to help with dream and vision. Classic corporate micromanagement serves little purpose for a governing board.

The largest hurdle we have to overcome is one of trust. We have to learn to trust that each group is led by the Holy Spirit and will follow. The structures by which we govern ourselves are crushing us under the weight of over management.

I see the Executive Board leading in terms of policy governance-type leadership as we all serve from the servant leadership perspective.

If we are trying to organize to save money, it seems to me to be the wrong basis.

We need people dedicated to following Christ serving in many roles. None of us are gifted in all areas of the service of the Kingdom.

A board charged with working with policy, dreams and vision will find new energy, experience new dreams and shared vision as they govern.

Look at the teachings of Jesus and the life of the emerging church in Acts. What general board made all those decisions? Paul and the early leaders had to let go and let God.—*Randy Springer, Hopedale, Ill.*

IN THIS ISSUE

The summer issue closest to the Fourth of July is traditionally focused on peace and peacemaking. That is also the case this year. David Brubaker (page 12) says, "We are effective as peacemakers to the degree that our character demonstrates the behaviors we are calling for in the world." Carolyn Holderread Heggen (page 14) calls Mennonite congregations to minister to military veterans who suffer "terrors of the soul" as a result of combat experience. Rachelle Lyndaker Schlabach offers a prayer for peace (page 11). There is also important news about Mennonite Central Committee's reorganization process (page 19) and the Executive Board's plans to restructure Mennonite Church USA (pages 20-21). Steve Dintaman's article (page 8) can help us all discern whether we need "Urgency or Patience" with the pressing questions about organizations in the church.—*Editor*

What does "credentialed" imply?

The article "Lancaster Bishops May Ordain Women" (June 3) contained the terms *credentialing* and *credentialed* four times in the first short paragraph and a total of six times in the article. The root word *credential* is defined as "something that gives or recommends credit or confidence." What messages are implied by the multiple use of this code word as adjective or verb (gerund)?

More seriously, how does this terminology contribute to the New Testament vision of leadership in the body of Christ?—*Harold D. Lehman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Uncomfortable with Mary devotion

There are Mennonites who feel uncomfortable with the seemingly rise of Mary devotion that is being put forth (Readers Say, June 3).

There is nothing wrong with fellowshiping with our brothers and sisters who belong to the Roman Catholic Church, but let us not forget that Jesus is the Center of what Christianity is all about, not His mother. Though Mary is an important person for Christians, the Bible is clear that she isn't in a position of authority as others have placed her. Jesus is our High Priest, who stands between us and the Father, not Mary.—*Brian Lay, Sioux City, Iowa*

Why the silence?

As I read Ron Adams' column ("When Pastors are Prophets," June 17), I wondered where the "Jeremiah Wrights" are in our Mennonite churches. In a few short years our culture has made torture acceptable, yet the church remains silent. Patriotism has compromised the quality of our witness, especially from the pulpits. Maybe it's because we've been taught to say something nice, or nothing at all.

No one will argue there are good things to say about our country, but isn't torture so beyond the pale that it requires us to speak up for justice? We live in a country that allows us to condemn torture without fear of being killed—so why the silence?
—*Shari Gehman Nyles, Fleetwood, Pa.*

Violence and force

Denny Weaver's "Visualizing Nonviolence" (May 20) helps us distinguish violence from coercion or force, both of which can be forms of nonviolence. But it is essential to make this kind of distinction. Once we give up our capacity to tell one thing from another, mushing everything together just because it isn't easy to distinguish, we fall into absurdity and apathy.

Other words may help, such as adding "homicidal" to violence—as in "homicidal violence"—because violence properly so called is willing to kill the other and "homicidal" is a useful modifier to make that clear.

Coercion or force, as Weaver speaks of them, might better be called "urging to change," because that is the intent and predictable result of the kind of actions he describes. Change is difficult for people, and the only thing more difficult than changing oneself may be believing that others can change. But nonviolence as a form of power and action is predicated on the resolute faith that others are capable of change. A Bible word for change is "repent."—*John K. Stoner, Akron, Pa.*

Mandela did not say it

In the May 20 "Grace and Truth," a passage is incorrectly attributed to Nelson Mandela. In fact, this passage is found in *A Return to Love*, a book by Marianne Williamson. Mandela's inaugural address can be found on the Internet.

A little thoughtful reflection on Nelson Mandela's life should be sufficient to inform us that such a man would not author the sentence, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?" These words sound, rather, like the words of a New Age guru, which they are.—*Cathy Conrad, Albuquerque, N.M.*

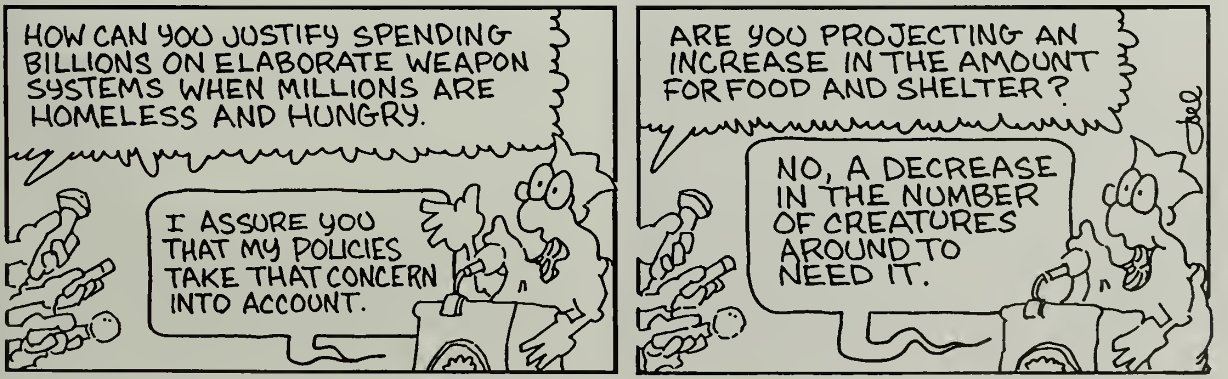
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Regarding the Mennonite conference in Winnipeg in July: (48 responses)

- ○ No one from my congregation will attend (48%)
- ○ I will attend (8%)
- ○ Someone else from my congregation will attend (2%)
- ○ Not sure (42%)

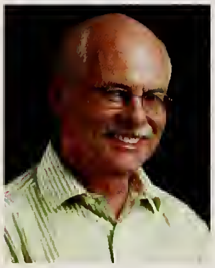
Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


HOW CAN YOU JUSTIFY SPENDING BILLIONS ON ELABORATE WEAPON SYSTEMS WHEN MILLIONS ARE HOMELESS AND HUNGRY.
I ASSURE YOU THAT MY POLICIES TAKE THAT CONCERN INTO ACCOUNT.
ARE YOU PROJECTING AN INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT FOR FOOD AND SHELTER?
NO, A DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CREATURES AROUND TO NEED IT.

IN BRIEF

Dirks to chair Fair Trade Federation



Ten Thousand Villages U.S. announces the appointment of Doug Dirks, public relations representative and master artisan storyteller, as chair of the board for the Fair Trade Federation (FTF). Dirks will define the priorities of the FTF while leading its members and implementing strategic initiatives geared toward the promotion of fair trade within mainstream markets across North America. Dirks was chosen to lead the fair trade institution by his FTF peers, and will serve for two years.—*Ten Thousand Villages*

TourMagination goes green

TourMagination will partner with Mennonite Economic Development Associates and Mennonite World Conference to promote MEDA's new carbon offset energy fund to TourMagination clients. TourMagination will encourage participants registering for its tours to Paraguay 2009 to visit the MEDA Web site to neutralize their travel impact and will soon make this option available to all clients. —*TourMagination*

Three churches to leave their conferences

GOSHEN, Ind.—On June 19, Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference delegates accepted the withdrawal of Providence Mennonite Church, Montgomery, Ind., which has joined the Conservative Mennonite Conference.

"This is the third congregation in Davies County (Ind.) to leave the conference in the last 10 years," said Tim Lichti, regional conference minister, noting that nearby Berea Mennonite Church joined the Conservative Conference several years ago. "Bethel [Mennonite Church] also considered the Conservative Conference but it wasn't conservative enough for them. The last I heard, the Bethel church was relating to the Walter Beachy Amish group."

Providence sent a letter in February indicating its intent to withdraw from Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference. The congregation has about 270 members.

"It was the liberal nature of [Indiana-Michigan] conference going back to the 1980s," Lichti said of Providence's reasons for withdrawal, "including women in ministry and lack of aggressive action taken on the homosexual issue."

On June 18, members of the First Mennonite Church of Berne (Ind.) decided to address their relationship to their area conference.

"The vote was to begin the process of leaving Central District Conference," said Rod Lehman, moderator of the 1,100-member congregation, "and looking at another conference but not leaving Mennonite Church USA."

Lehman said congregational leaders have had preliminary conversations with another Mennonite Church USA conference, but those conversations were unofficial and with a few conference leaders.

Blossom Hill Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., voted in May to leave Lancaster Mennonite Conference. The church has not yet determined to which conference they will transfer.—*Everett J. Thomas*

Photo provided

Cross-cultural partnership for Lancaster churches

New Holland (Pa.) Spanish Mennonite Church and Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., gather together on June 8 for a picnic and worship service as a part of the ongoing partnership between the Hispanic and Anglo congregations. The two churches have been involved in a mutual partnership for the past year and a half.—*Mellinger Mennonite Church*

Church participates in anti-torture campaign

FORT COLLINS, Colo.—The Fort Collins Mennonite Fellowship has been committed to renouncing torture over the past three years.

Upon recommendation by the congregation's Peace and Justice Team and in cooperation with companion actions by the National Council of Churches and the National Religious Coalition Against Torture, "Sunday letters" addressing torture and signed by church members have been sent to Washington D.C. six times.

For Torture Awareness month in June, promoted by NRCAT, the Fellowship displayed a banner reading "Torture Is Morally Wrong" outside the church building as a public witness.
—*Mountain States Mennonite Conference*

MDS determines response to Iowa flooding

KALONA, Iowa—The majority of flood waters have peaked and begun to subside in Iowa. Rivers such as the Des Moines, Cedar and Iowa, as well as countless smaller rivers have created widespread damage to the farmland.

Homeowners are gradually being allowed in to look at the damage and remove limited valuables. Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) has been receiving numerable calls of requests for help, as well as people offering to volunteer. Aside from sandbagging, volunteers have yet to be allowed in to begin cleanup.

More than 50 people met at Sunnyside Conservative Mennonite Church in Kalona on June 16 to discuss the MDS response to current flooding once communities are open for volunteers.—*MDS*

Conestoga Mennonite faces fire damages

LANCASTER, Pa.—Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa., sustained about $1 million in damages during a June 15 fire, possibly caused by a lightning strike.

Hours after firefighters doused the last flames, members set up chairs under a portico and held church services outside on June 16.

James Wenger, interim pastor, said firefighters believe the fire may have been sparked by a light-

Jim Bishop

tern Mennonite University hosts Bach Festival

stasia Jellison, a featured soloist, performs at the 16th ual Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival at Eastern Mennonite versity, Harrisonburg, Va., June 8-15.—*EMU*

ning strike during a storm. The building may have smoldered and then caught fire.

A state police fire marshal ruled that the fire's cause was accidental in nature, but the investigation is continuing.
—*Lancaster New Era*

MCC completes 61 years of meat canning

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee's mobile meat canner completed its 61st year of operation in April. The season yielded 550,000 plus cans of meat during the 2007-2008 season to ship to hungry people around the world.

Members of this year's crew are Josh Voth of Goessel, Kan.; Viktor Schwendich of Huenfeld, Germany; Eric Thomas of East Petersburg, Pa.; and David Martens of Winkler, Manitoba.—*MCC*

MWC calls for intercession for Zimbabwe

STRASBOURG, France—Mennonite World Conference sent a deacon couple and called for two days of prayer and fasting, June 26-27, as Zimbabweans faced a tense run-off election on June 27.

It has also appealed to the heads of the Southern African Development Community, the African Union and the United Nations to intervene in the troubled country.—*Mennonite World Conference*

Ugandan school opens, named for Tony Brown

HESSTON, Kan.—Anthony Brown Baritone Comprehensive School, a high school in Uganda named for Tony Brown, has opened for students. Brown, an internationally-acclaimed baritone and Hesston College sociology professor, has sent several thousand dollars to the school.

Brown says that leaders of Friends of Orphans, the Ugandan agency that sponsored his visit to that war-torn country, indicate that 50 formerly abducted child mothers and 70 former child soldiers, vulnerable children and youth who had not been in school are now receiving academic, vocational and technical training and entrepreneurship programs.—*Hesston College*

Mennonite Women USA board member dies

NEWTON, Kan.—Evie Hertzler, Mennonite Women USA board member from 2004-2008, died on June 3 after a yearlong struggle with Lou Gerig's (ALS) disease.

Prior to moving to Harrisonburg, Va., 10 years ago, she and her husband Don lived in West Liberty, Ohio, where she served as chair of Ohio Mennonite Women. Hertzler's written account of her journey facing a diagnosis of ALS will run in *Timbrel*'s September-October issue.—*Mennonite Women USA*

Sports and Fitness Classic canceled this year

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Because of limited registrations, the 2008 Mennonite Sports and Fitness Classic has been canceled by its sponsoring organizations. Members of the planning committee, representing the Mennonite Association of Retired Persons, Mennonite Mutual Aid and Goshen (Ind.) College, decided to cancel the event on June 9 after receiving approximately 40 registrations, compared to 75 in 2006.—*Mennonite Association of Retired Persons*

EMU hosts military leaders in roundtable

HARRISONBURG, Va.—For the first time in its 90-year history, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, invited military, government and nongovernmental leaders to meet on campus in concert with participants in EMU's annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute—a 13-year-old program with thousands of alumni working for peace around the world. The EMU roundtable on civil society, conflict prevention and U.S. security infrastructure was sponsored by the 3D Security Initiative under EMU's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding.—*EMU*

—*compiled by Anna Groff*

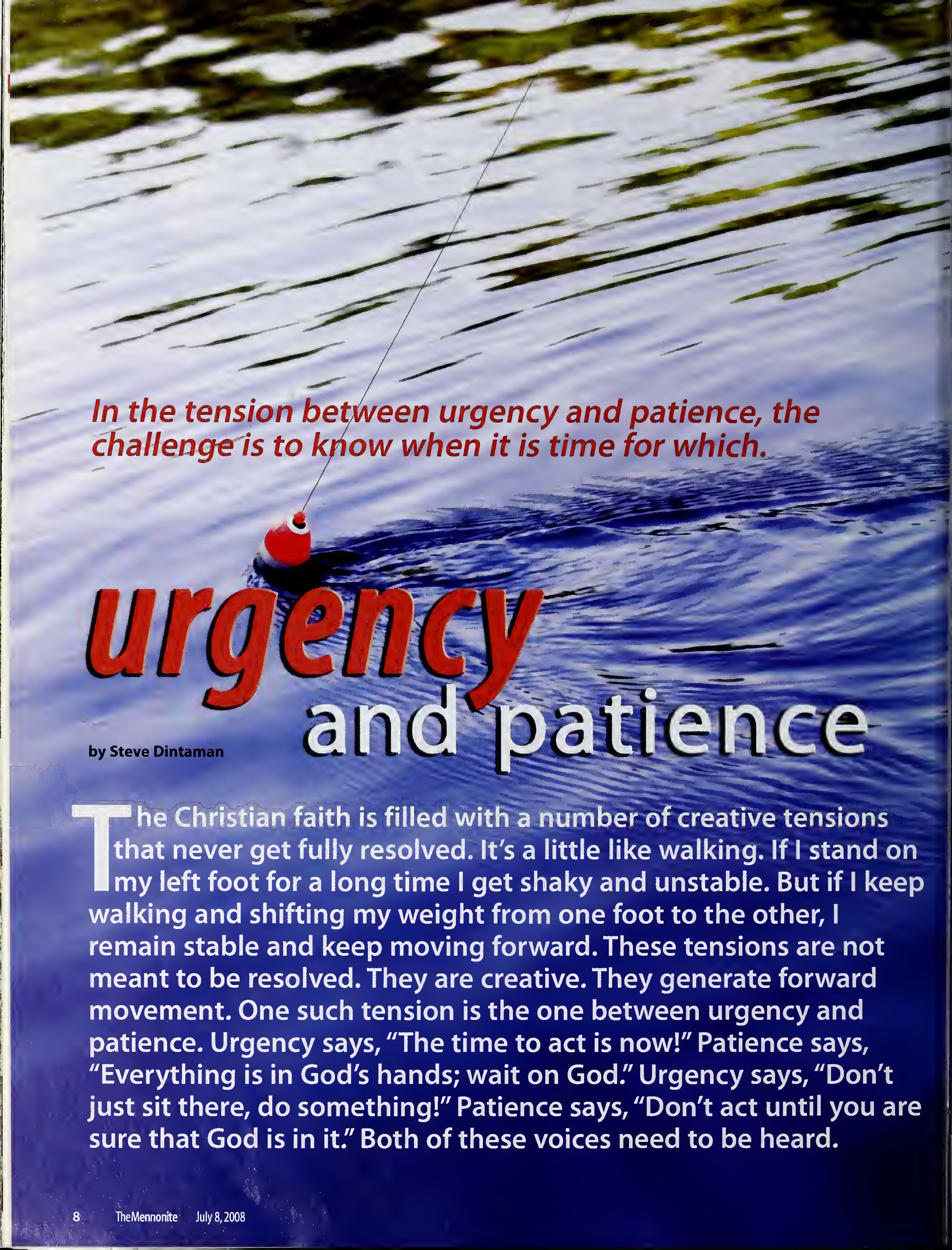
IN BRIEF

Religious Survey second report released

The second report of the *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey* from the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life finds: Although many Americans are highly religious, they are not dogmatic in their faith. Seventy percent of Americans with a religious affiliation say that many religions—not just their own—can lead to eternal life. Most also think there is more than one correct way to interpret the teachings of their own faith. This does not mean, however, that Americans take religious matters lightly. Most, in fact, say they rank the importance of religion very highly in their lives, and a plurality wants to preserve the traditional beliefs and practices of their faith, while only a small minority wants to accommodate their religion to modern culture. There is tremendous diversity of religious beliefs and practices. Important religious differences exist between the major religious traditions, but also within religious traditions.—*Religion News Service*

Lancaster Mennonite girls soccer wins states

On June 6, the Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School girls soccer team outscored Fleetwood 3-2 to capture the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association championship—the first state championship for the school.—*LMHS*



In the tension between urgency and patience, the challenge is to know when it is time for which.

urgency and patience

by Steve Dintaman

The Christian faith is filled with a number of creative tensions that never get fully resolved. It's a little like walking. If I stand on my left foot for a long time I get shaky and unstable. But if I keep walking and shifting my weight from one foot to the other, I remain stable and keep moving forward. These tensions are not meant to be resolved. They are creative. They generate forward movement. One such tension is the one between urgency and patience. Urgency says, "The time to act is now!" Patience says, "Everything is in God's hands; wait on God." Urgency says, "Don't just sit there, do something!" Patience says, "Don't act until you are sure that God is in it." Both of these voices need to be heard.

There are times in Jesus' ministry where he places people in front of an urgent decision, and if they delay or waffle, the opportunity passes and they lose out.

There are certainly many times in church history where (at least as we look back) it appears the church missed its window of opportunity to act—and failed. Many of us can look back with regret on occasions where we thought about acting but hesitated and missed our opportunity.

But there are also powerful calls in Scripture for believers to be patient. At the critical moment in the story of the Exodus, God tells Israel to "stand still, and see the deliverance that the Lord has prepared for you ..." After his resurrection Jesus tells the disciples, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised." The entire book of Revelation is a call for saints to practice "patient endurance."

In the tension between urgency and patience, the challenge is to know when it is time for which, and how the two are related. The danger is that if we collapse this tension and run to one or the other extreme our faith becomes one-legged—unbalanced and shaky.

In our Mennonite past we may have at times over-emphasized patience. When I was a boy I remember visiting my grandpa and grandma Dintaman. To me they were people who embodied the strength of patience. When I was with them I felt like a weed next to a tree. On this particular Indiana summer day, the skies were oily-black and threatening. With the recent memory of the 1965 Palm Sunday tornadoes fresh in my mind I asked grandpa if we shouldn't go to the basement. He continued slowly rocking in his chair and said, "If it is our time to go, then going to the basement won't help, and if it's not our time to go God will protect us." Well, that is fine and good for grandpas and grandmas, but as a boy I could not share their patience. I was sure it was time to act!

Patience, if it cannot hear the voice of urgency, becomes simply resignation to the way things are. Patience begins to sound more like fatalism. Patience taken to the extreme leaves everything in God's hands and diminishes and devalues our own creative role as stewards of God's creation.

If the voice of patience dominated our past, the voice of urgency threatens to overwhelm us today. If it is not grounded in patience, urgency has its own set of dangers. But how can we not sound urgent? Our world is faced with threats that at least from our limited vantage point seem unparalleled in human history. Global warming, pollution, the threat of protracted war between the western world and fundamentalist Islam, the growing divide between the wealthy and the poor—you name it. The time to act is now!

The prominence of the voice of urgency and the decline of the voice of patience are also rooted in some fundamental changes in how we view the world. As Mennonites living in the 21st century, we have gained more self-confidence. No longer content to be part of a minority community—over against a majority culture that we could hardly hope to influence—we have become more confident that we can make a positive difference in the wider world.

The voice of urgency is also very much an American thing. Impatience is a national trait. Living in Lithuania, a country that recently emerged out the dysfunctional economics of the Soviet Union, I get impatient. Lithuanians are so used to living with things that don't work very well that they have simply learned to adjust to whatever doesn't work. If the driver's-side car door doesn't unlock, then you just crawl in the passenger's side. As an American, my reflex is, "fix the problem as soon as you discover it."

There are many good things about this fix-it-now mentality, but a lot of the world's problems are not as simple as fixing a door. How many times have you attended a church conference where someone passionately presented a situation of human suffering and injustice—and the heartfelt outcry from the audience was, "What can we do?" There is something so right about this response, and yet it has its own hidden dangers. It can mask an almost arrogant self-confidence that we can correctly analyze and solve the great problems of the world. This American hubris can take many forms. It is in our government's naïve belief that we can dash into Iraq with our military and turn Iraq into a friendly democracy.

Patience should never be used to ... escape from our responsibility in the face of suffering.

But I also see it at times in American liberals who seem almost as confident in their own way that they are the ones who correctly understand and can solve the world's problems—but without using violence. Both the right and left believe the world is broken but we can fix it.

I recently attended a conference where the main speaker lamented all the violent images of God in the Scriptures and argued that since many Christians use these violent images to justify their own violence, the only solution is to purge all violent images from our view of God. Even the concept of an atoning sacrifice was too bloody to suit his tastes. (This speaker was not a Mennonite.) He concluded by insisting that we must choose. Either we keep perpetuating violence in God's name, or we purge all violent images from our view of God. This task is urgent he said, "Because the future of humanity is at stake." Wow! That is an urgent call to action. But the more I reflect on this call to action the more it disturbs me. Is the future of humanity at stake? Will something that we do or don't do actually determine the future of humanity?

Urgency can sometimes cover and express unbelief. If we believe that there is a Redeemer, then we cannot believe that the future of humanity is at stake in our actions. We are most decisively not the saviors of the world. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus from the dead is God's action that gives us the promise of a New Creation. The world is broken, but God has redeemed it through Jesus Christ.

Confidence in the victory of Christ . . . frees us from the exhaustion, anger and violence that comes from fighting the battle as if the outcome depended on us.

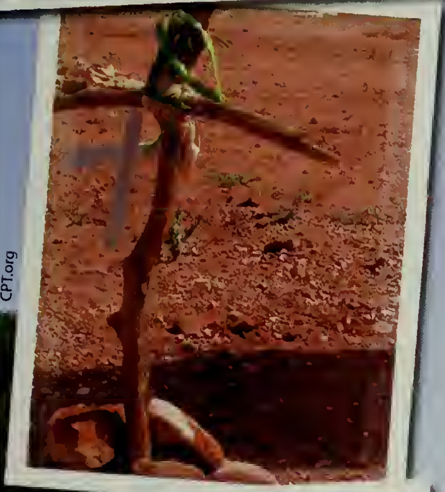
This confidence in God's redemption is the heart of calm in the midst of the storm. This hope gives us a patience that can nourish and empower fruitful action. This confidence in God's redeeming work frees us from arrogance and puts our actions in perspective. Urgent calls to action that operate out of the assumption that we must save the world or it is doomed, will lead to frustration, anger and burnout.

The liberating message of Scripture is that the decisive battle against the principalities and powers that seem to hold the world in their grip has already been fought and won by God through the death and resurrection of Jesus. This is so freeing. If we believe that the battle is ours to fight and win, it can lead to desperation, to anger—and even hatred of those who oppose us. Even those who are committed to wrestling against the demons of darkness nonviolently can become consumed with the passion and anger of the battle. Confidence in the victory of Christ frees us to love and frees us from the exhaustion, anger and violence that comes from fighting the battle as if the outcome depended on us.

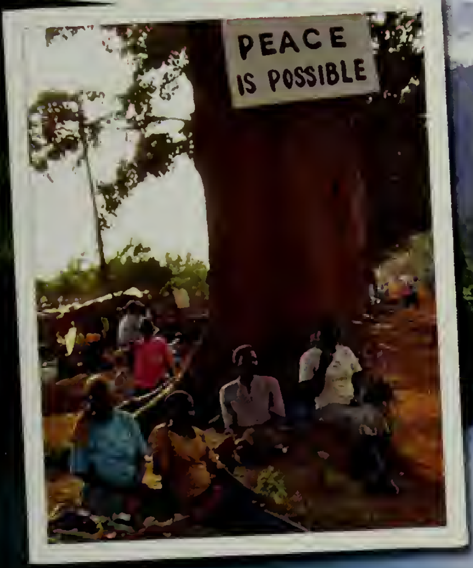
We as believers do get to share in God's creative work. But we need some clear thought about how God's work and our work are related. I like to describe how God's work and our work are related by thinking about my wife's and my experience of bringing children into the world. I mean we are modern people. We halfway understand that this is all a natural biological process. But when I first held our babies in my arms and looked into their faces, all I could think is, "Dear Lord, where did you come from?" It was so clear that this child was not our work; the child was a gift of God, pure and simple. All we got to do was experience some of the joy and the pain (my wife got to experience the latter somewhat more fully than I did) of bringing new life into the world. New life is a gift from God. Salvation is the work of God, but you and I through our actions get a taste of the joy and pain of bringing this new life into the world. The experience of sharing in the life-creating power of God should always leave us profoundly humbled.

Patience should never be used to protect us from urgent calls to action or escape from our human responsibility in the face of suffering. Sharing in God's compassion means we will always be moved to respond to human suffering in whatever ways we can. If we are not ready to act when God calls, then our faith is bogus and our peace is just indifference. But at the center of our actions is confidence in God, who is our strength and our salvation. There is a profound wisdom in Isaiah 30:15 which reminds us that "in quietness and in trust shall be your strength."

Steve Dintaman is chair of the theology department at Lithuania Christian College where he and his wife Betsy serve as missionaries with Mennonite Mission Network and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions.



CPT.org



CPT.org

Prayer for peace

God, who calms the wind and seas,
 whose ways are higher than our ways,
 and whose thoughts are higher than our thoughts,

Only you can calm the raging of the nations,
 the impulses of war,
 the eagerness to destroy another
 in defense of our own interests.
Only you can take hearts of stone
 and turn them into hearts of flesh.

And so we beg you to thwart the ways of policymakers
 who rush to war.
Replace their desire for war with a desire for justice and for peace.

Give us the courage to be messengers in word and deed of your Good News,
 to announce your reign to all peoples and nations,
 to Congress and to our communities.

Hear the cries of those who suffer as a result of war—
 civilians, soldiers, veterans, family members,
 those whose schools and homes have been destroyed,
 those whose souls have been torn apart.
Have mercy on them, O Lord.

May all of us together go out in joy and be led forth in peace,
 people hand in hand with people,
 nations together with nations.

Amen

Written by Rachelle Lyndaker Schlabach, director of the Washington Office, Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Passionate (not angry) peacemakers

by David Brubaker

STOP The Wall
Land NO Confiscation

CPT.org

The first seven years of this new millennium have proven to be a challenging time for peacemakers. Wars devastated Sudan and the Congo and continue to rage in Iraq and Afghanistan, while violent civil conflict grips Colombia and Myanmar/Burma. The U.S. invasion and ongoing occupation of Iraq, in particular, generates intense opposition both in the United States and internationally. Individuals passionate about peacemaking, who also happen to be U.S. citizens, face a particularly difficult dilemma. How do we work constructively for peace while we are furious with the behavior of our own government?

We now live in a world not unlike the one in which much of the New Testament was written. A single country with unrivaled military power dominates the political, economic and cultural tone for much of the world, while the chasm between the world's wealthiest and poorest citizens continues to widen. Those of us who value justice and peace look around and become not only passionate about what's happening, we often become angry as well. But passionate, angry peacemakers tend not to bring about positive change in their societies. Passionate, principled peacemakers do.

Our attitude always leaks out anyhow, so we might as well work at being genuinely humble—at accepting the reality that there are limits to what we know.

Here is where a letter written nearly 2,000 years ago has much to say to our generation and to our time. In his first letter, Peter writes to Jewish and Gentile Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor. This was not a letter written to a specific congregation with specific needs, but rather a letter to various groups of people with diverse challenges. Peter first stresses neither behavior nor beliefs but identity. He wants his readers to remember that they are "God's elect," "strangers in the world," a "chosen people," a "royal priesthood," a "holy nation." Identity matters because 1 Peter is in large part a call to "live godly lives in a pagan society," as the New International Version summarizes. As such, this letter could be appropriately written to Anabaptist Christians at this point in American history.

In chapter two and the early part of chapter three, Peter offers guidelines for citizens, slaves, wives and husbands. But by verses 8 and 9 of chapter three, Peter is again addressing all believers.

"Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing."

As we continue through the remainder of chapter three, we can identify seven character traits that Peter is calling for in his readers. The first five are found in verse 8 and the remaining two are in verse 15. These are, in order:

1. Harmony
2. Sympathy
3. Love
4. Compassion
5. Humility
6. Gentleness
7. Respect

Not surprisingly, these character traits are similar to Paul's "fruits of the Spirit" that we find in Galatians 5:22—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. I would suggest that these traits—whether drawn from Paul's list or from Peter's—are the character traits that those of us who seek to be passionate, principled peacemakers must be developing.

I graduated from college in 1980 with a passion for peace and justice and soon became involved in the nuclear freeze movement. I even participated in a million-person, antinuclear march in New York City in 1981. But the organizing meetings left me cold. There was a lot of anger expressed towards President Reagan, and, although I shared the opposition to his administration's policies, I was uncomfortable with the very personal antagonism that was evident.

Several years later I was drawn instead to the more faith-based Central American peace movements, where individuals went with groups like Witness for Peace to Nicaragua to put their lives on the line for what they believed.

We are effective as peacemakers to the degree that our character demonstrates the behaviors that we are calling for in the world. As Gandhi asserted, we must "be the change we wish to see" in the world. We are completely ineffective as peacemakers when we demonstrate the opposite of these

How we can work constructively for peace while we are furious with the behavior of our own government

character traits. When instead of demonstrating harmony we display destructive conflict, when instead of showing love we show hate, apathy in place of compassion, arrogance rather than humility, violence (including verbal violence) rather than gentleness and personal attacks instead of respectful discourse.

Three central character traits: I believe that three of these traits deserve special attention for the faith-based peacemaker: love, humility and respect. Let's consider each of these in order.

The two greatest commandments—Jesus' essential summary of all 10 of the Mosaic commandments—are "Love the Lord your God and love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus called us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength—to be completely in love with God. In my experience, that kind of love develops over a lifetime of slowly realizing that God is head over heels in love with us. We love God because God first loved us. Love for others, especially enemies, is then made possible by a deep acceptance of God's unconditional love for us, and them.

The second core trait is humility. True humility connotes an honest assessment of not only one's weaknesses but also of one's strengths. In Romans 12 Paul suggests that one "not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment." Humility is not self-debasement. It is rather a simple acknowledgment that I don't possess all truth on any subject, that I "see through a glass darkly" even while I remain passionate about the truth that I do have.

Humility is primarily about attitude. Attitude is huge in conflict, because it communicates much more powerfully than the mere words that we use. As my wife often reminds me after I've said something hurtful or simply stupid, "It's not what you said, David, it's the way that you said it." Our attitude always leaks out anyhow, so we might as well work at being genuinely humble—at accepting the reality that there are limits to what we know.

The third critical character trait of the peacemaker is respect. Webster says that "to respect" means "to feel or show honor or esteem for" or "to show consideration for." Effective peacemakers retain respect for the parties with whom they work and the people with whom they interact. Sometimes we show respect according to the first definition, and sometimes it's according to the second—we show consideration for, or understanding of, their circumstances. To treat others with "gentleness and respect" also means that we may have to change our attitudes toward those with whom we disagree.

So how do we develop the character traits needed to seek peace and pursue it? The answer is found in 1 Peter 3:15, "But in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord."

As we seek to follow Jesus—as we allow ourselves to be shaped in the image of Christ—we develop his traits. Although I have some interest in whether or not someone affirms all the right doctrinal statements about Jesus, I am passionate about whether or not we are attempting to actually live like Jesus. (A "disciple" is the active follower of a particular teacher, not just a passive adherent to particular beliefs about the teacher.)

We are effective as peacemakers to the degree that our character demonstrates the behaviors that we are calling for in the world.

What would it mean to live like Jesus, to be a "passionate, principled peacemaker" as he was? I believe that becoming a disciple of Jesus means that our character is increasingly shaped to be more like his. Jesus was known for his love for God, his love for neighbors and even his love for enemies—all the way to the cross. And Jesus predicted that his followers would be known for their love as well.

If we are to develop the traits of a Christian peacemaker, we need to "set apart Christ as Lord." For Peter's readers, this statement clearly meant that they were to follow Jesus, not Caesar. For us as well, it also means that we reject the system of domination and violence exemplified by imperial policies and commit to following Jesus instead.

God is at work transforming the world. If we want a more peaceful and just world, we need to become more just, peaceable and loving individuals and communities. Therefore, let us commit, with God's help, to being the change we wish to see in the world.

David Brubaker is assistant professor of organizational studies at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. This article was adapted from a sermon based on 1 Peter 3:8-17.

A call to welcome combat veterans who are paralyzed with sha

The wounds

by Carolyn Holderread Heggen

I am the descendent of generations of Mennonite and Church of the Brethren pacifists. While my innate aversion to war and things military runs deep, as a citizen of the United States I have not been able to avoid the implications of living in a country that depends so mightily on its military.

The atomic bombing of Japan and the Vietnam War were pivotal historical and sociological events in our Baby Boomer formative years. Both seared into our minds the horrors of war for innocent civilian victims. The Vietnam War and ensuing years also taught us the long-term horrors and damage for those who fight our wars.

Advances in technology have allowed us to visualize how trauma and violence alter the brain and affect subsequent human behavior. While the technology is new, we have long known that participating in war changes soldiers. Different names have been used to describe these changes in combat veterans. In the Civil War they were called "the staggers," or "irritable heart," or "soldiers' heart" and were regarded as signs of cowardice. Soldiers who displayed these symptoms were treated with contempt. In WW1 they were called "shell shock" and in WW2 were called "combat neurosis," "battle fatigue," or "combat exhaustion."

During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, an average of 120 returned veterans have killed themselves each week—a rate twice that of the general population.

PTSD: Vietnam forced the mental health community to pay increased attention to the psychological costs of war. In 1980 the diagnosis of Post (after) Traumatic (deep wound, serious injury) Stress (adverse reactions to the trauma) Disorder (problems with thinking and feeling that cause distress and interfere with daily living) was added to the standard manual of psychiatric disorders.

Entire new fields of scientific study that help us understand the psychological and spiritual implications of killing have developed in the aftermath of Vietnam. Killology is the scholarly study of how individuals and society change when one human being kills another. Dave Grossman's classic text in this field is entitled *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. Quaker peace activist and professor Rachel MacNair has coined the term Perpetration-Induced Traumatic Stress and has studied the psychological consequences of being an active participant in causing trauma or killing.

The issue is, of course, not simply academic. As more soldiers serve and return from the current wars, the severity of readjustment problems has become common front page news. Typical symptoms of veteran PTSD include reexperiencing the trauma through intrusive thoughts, flashbacks, nightmares and disturbing mental images; emotional numbing and avoidance of people, places or activities that remind one of the trauma event; depression and overwhelming feelings of sadness and fear that life will never get better; suicidal thoughts and feelings; anger, aggression and lack of impulse control; guilt; sense of purposelessness and loss of faith, meaning and connection with the divine.

Given that combat and killing affect many soldiers in these ways, it is not surprising that the rate of domestic violence, marital discord, alcoholism and substance abuse, criminality, suicide and murder among returned combat veterans is high. A U.S. Army study found that "severe aggression" against spouses is more than three times higher among Army families than among civilians. Domestic violence shelters report that since the start of the Iraqi War, not only are the number of incidents higher, but the lethality is greater. During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, an average of 120 returned veterans have killed themselves each week, a rate twice that of the general population. *New York Times* investigators recently found 121 cases in which veterans of these wars have been charged with murder since returning home. Such statistics begin to help us understand the true cost of war for those we ask to fight, their loved ones and their communities.

Our society never successfully addressed the mental health problems of many of our Vietnam veterans. If you doubt this, visit a homeless shelter or talk to men living on our streets. Some mental health professionals now speak of a "tsunami of mental health problems" facing us as more and more traumatized veterans return from Iraq and Afghanistan. Because of the stigma of admitting weakness and fear that their military careers may be damaged, many traumatized veterans are reluctant to seek help within the military. For those who do turn to the military for help, there is often a long wait due to the shortage of mental health professionals. But an upgraded medical and psychological infrastructure can't in itself heal the wounds of war.

While there are clear psychological components of PTSD and symptom management techniques

d suffering terrors of the soul

# of war

Arlo Abrahamson | U.S. Navy

that can relieve some post-combat distress, there are limits to what traditional counseling can offer the traumatized soldier. Many of the issues have a spiritual component, I believe, and require spiritual language and resources if they are to be healed.

An almost-universal human rule spanning time and culture is that it is wrong to kill another human. The military, well aware of this, trains its members to override this innate inhibition. But when veterans return to civilian life and reflect, for many the significance of their behavior becomes a terrifying insight and condemnation. In my psychotherapy work with veterans they sometimes speak of having lost their soul, of feeling dead inside, of having crossed a line that put them outside the human family, of having condemned themselves to a place beyond the reach of God's grace. When they speak of the violence in which they have participated, many express deep moral anguish and existential shame. The fact that they were "just doing what the government told them to do" does not lessen their burden.

Our Mennonite theology and practice of peace and justice are respected around the world, even by those who disagree with some of our conclusions. We have offered an articulate voice denouncing the ineffectiveness and evils of violence. We have called, worked, marched, prayed, fasted and sung for peace. Where wars have been waged, we have creatively attempted to bring healing and hope to victims and to right the wrongs that violence has created. I pray we will continue to do this with even more creativity and commitment. But I believe God is calling us at this point in history to go one step further, to extend our message of healing and hope to veterans, to those who are both perpetrators and victims of the destructive violence of war.

Because we believe that violence and war are a violation of the Jesus way and of God's intention, we should be in a position to understand that beyond the brain changes and disturbing PTSD symptoms and the maladaptive behaviors of some returning vets lies a deep wound to the soul. The spiritual trauma that alters the core identity of vets can only be addressed and healed with spiritual resources.

Father William Mahedy, a Vietnam chaplain who's devoted his life to working with veterans, describes war as "an explosion of hatred into systemic and ruthless violence" and says, "the guilt of war is the guilt of having been a bearer of death and terrible suffering to one's fellow humans." Such guilt can not be resolved with deep breathing techniques or visualizations of peaceful meadows. Only a welcoming community of spiritual people can speak with healing integrity to the soul terrors and paralyzing shame of the combat veteran.

The military mental health system and community psychological service centers must continue to provide symptom management training, anger control techniques, substance abuse rehabilitation and individual and family counseling. But only communities of faith have the language and understandings to address the core spiritual residue of war and the spiritual hell into which many veterans believe they have eternally cast themselves. We understand confession and forgiveness, grace and mercy, transformation and conversion. We believe that people are more than the worst thing they have done. We believe that no sin is beyond the redemptive mercy of God. We believe that the ministry of reconciliation and healing is at the heart of the gospel and the work of the church. Can we learn how to apply these gospel truths and extend our hands of welcoming compassion to spiritually damaged veterans and their loved ones?

> Only a welcoming community of spiritual people can speak with healing integrity to the soul terrors and paralyzing shame of the combat veteran.

This is not a ministry intended to "fix" veterans so they can return to battle. It is a commitment to listen to their disturbing stories, to call them to repentance and extend God's mercy and forgiveness, to help them engage in acts of reconstruction and justice making, to love them and their families into our community of faith where we can together learn what it means to be pilgrims on a journey of amazing grace. May God give us sensitivity, courage and wisdom.

Carolyn Holderread Heggen lives in Corvallis, Ore., and is a member of the Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church. She is a psychotherapist who specializes in trauma recovery. If your congregation would like to learn more about reaching out to military veterans, contact Carolyn at cheggen@yahoo.com.

May peace

Do not repay evil with evil or insult wit
called so that you may inherit a blessin

Stockxpert.com

by Tara Michelle Gerber

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.
—1 Peter 3:13-17

It was finally the end of a particularly frustrating and disheartening night for the BreakAway Junior High ministry at Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church. What we had planned as a fun, laid-back night to let loose with some dodge ball games in the local elementary school gym proved to be anything but relaxing.

Our children's and youth ministries bring in a number of youth from outside our congregation through outreach, and the community kids we attract often bring with them a unique set of challenges. This night, our usual gang of sixth grade boys had tested everyone's patience to the limit, demanding attention through being disruptive and experimenting with how much disrespect it would take to get a rise out of the volunteer leaders and other kids in the group. As a final consequence, I made the rule that everyone who had received warnings that night would not have a snack.

*Tyler, who had been invited for the first time that night, was angry because a leader had taken away the lighter he had brought with him; it was to be given back when he went home. Tyler was on the "no snack" list, but he pushed into the kitchen demanding his lighter back. After one of our staff had returned it to him he began flicking it defiantly, making motions with the flame as if he intended to set something on fire.

At that point I firmly took it back from his hand and told him that for safety reasons he needed to be outside of the church before he would get it back. He made it clear that he was not very happy about the arrangement, but he knew I meant business and stomped out the door.

Once we got outside, I handed the lighter back to him as promised. He started making threats and flicking the lighter, holding the flame close to the wall of the church building (which happens to be brick), asking which car was mine so that he could slit the tires, etc. But what he wasn't counting on was that I can face personal threats without batting an eye. A number of the previous ministries which I had worked with through college had involved at-risk youth from some pretty difficult home situations. I had broken up street fights and taken some punches, so verbal threats were nothing new. I had learned to recognize when certain behaviors are aimed at getting a response—an attempt to test you and see how you will react. My training and experience had taught me that the best way to deescalate a conflict situation of that nature is to not give any reaction, to just appear calm and unconcerned.

So after a while of just standing there quietly without interfering, I could see him starting to deflate. I stood leaning against the front doorway and began praying silently, "Father, I call your shield of protection upon this place; that any evil

prevail

sult, but with blessing, because to this you were
1 Peter 3:9

here right now would be sent away, it has no place here or in the life of this child."

Right at that moment, Tyler took his lighter and threw it as high as he could onto the church roof. I stood shocked for a moment, and then said, "Just a minute ago that lighter was pretty important to you, and now you've just thrown it away?"

"It was out of fluid," he said defensively, "what good is an empty lighter going to do me?"

I shrugged and said nothing; inwardly, I was laughing with the joy of how God sometimes chooses to answer our desperate prayers not only promptly, but with humor. But outwardly, I knew I had to act quickly if I wanted to take advantage of the fact that he had just been willing to talk to me, before he put the walls back up completely.

"What grade are you in, Tyler?" I asked, a first feeble attempt at opening communication with small-talk. He said it was "NOYB"—none of your business—and that he didn't want to talk to me. Wrong-o, Tara, walls haven't budged, but nice try.

"Okay, that's fair," I said as if it didn't make the least bit of difference to me one way or the other, "you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to talk about."

"Well, it's not like I have anything that I don't want to talk about," he said, scuffing his shoe on the ground and avoiding eye contact.

I waited wordlessly for a few moments longer as he paced around, uneasy, still looking for something to take out his anger on. Ironically, he settled for our church's Peace Pole. Another message from my Father to add some wit and wisdom to the situation? "May peace prevail on earth …"

I watched without interfering as he repeatedly pulled it up out of its place in the ground, then slammed it back down into the hole again, watching the rainwater and mud that had gathered in the base splash up the wooden sides.

Then at some unexplainable prompting, despite the protests of my common sense judgment, a new question blurted out that jumped way beyond the small-talk, right to the core

"Tyler," I said, "What makes you angry?"

Get real Tara. If he refuses to answer a simple factual question, he's not going to open up to you about his feelings.

"Everything," he said. The lessening of the tension in the air was almost palpable.

Whoa, did you hear that? He just opened the door a crack and invited you to take a step into who he is. Don't blow this one, Tara. Take it easy, but don't pass up the opportunity when it's here. You might not get another. Just let him know he matters.

"Things at home; things at school?" I said.

"Everything. My whole life."

He stopped trying to find something to destroy and walked back to where I was standing in the doorway. He leaned against the wall opposite from me—perhaps seeking some solid support as he felt his own inner walls beginning to weaken and crack.

"Was it always that bad, or do you remember a time when life wasn't so bad?"

"No, it's always been that way except …"

For the first time I saw a bit of the anger leave his face—a little light came into his eyes, which were no longer avoiding mine.

"Except at 6:45 yesterday," he said, "because that's when I met *Jack, Lenny and Dillan."

How ironic: That same group of boys that had been causing our ministry volunteers so much frustration this year was perhaps the first thing that looked like "hope" to this lonely, angry boy—maybe the first to ever claim him as a friend, as a part of them, something he belonged to. Even more ironically, it was through those boys that he had this chance to connect with people who will try their hardest to love him for who he is and a chance to connect with the God who always has.

Then *Billy, another first-timer to our ministry who needed to walk home with Tyler, came out from getting his snack, and they prepared to leave. As they headed across the parking lot walking their bikes, I called out, "Thanks for coming tonight guys. We hope to see you next week. And Tyler, I'm really glad I got to talk with you."

May peace prevail.

Tara Michelle Gerber is youth ministry coordinator for Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

*Names of youth have been changed.

About waterboarding, Mr. President

Gene Stoltzfus was the director of Christian Peacemaker Teams for its initial 16 years. He now lives in Fort Frances, Ontario.

Dear Mr. President: Waterboarding is on my mind. I know you have expressed firm convictions that it is necessary. I also understand that as a politician you need to show progress in your efforts to prevail against terrorism. Since we both claim to be Christians I thought I would tell you a story from my own faith history that may be helpful for your deliberations regarding the use of waterboarding and other methods of torture to eliminate the enemy all the way to the gates of hell.

My strand of Christians traces our history back to Jesus through hard times, suffering and moments of great integrity of life and faith. Historians tell me that the practice of waterboarding can be traced to the Spanish Inquisition in the same time frame as the persecution of my faith ancestors the Anabaptists, by the Protestant Reformation and the Roman Catholic Counter Reformation. Practices like waterboarding were used to put down the Protestant Reformers, Jews, witches and other heretics.

My ancestors were tortured because they refused to accept infant baptism although they accepted and promoted baptism for adults who could make intelligent free choices about becoming followers of Jesus. As the movement away from infant baptism spread, the basic issue was their lack of allegiance to the political authorities as symbolized by infant baptism. Despite pockets of pacifism within the movement for almost a century, Anabaptists were considered lawless, insurrectionists and enemies of the state.

Authorities were convinced that torture would stem the tide of rebaptizing that was then spreading throughout Europe and was considered a threat to state power. King Ferdinand, the ruler of the time based in Spain, believed that drowning, another use of water for persecution of Anabaptists, was an acceptable state response to the heresy. His people called it the third baptism. William Schweiker, Distinguished Service Professor of Theological Ethics at the University of Chicago Divinity School and director of the Martin Marty Center, writes, "In the Inquisition, the practice was not drowning as such, but the threat of drowning, and the symbolic threat of baptism. The *tortura del agua* or *toca* entailed forcing the victim to ingest water poured into a cloth stuffed into the mouth in order to give the impression of drowning. Because of the wide symbolic meaning of "water" in the Christian and Jewish traditions (creation, the great flood, the parting of the Red Sea in the Exodus and drowning of the Egyptians, Christ's walking on the water, and, centrally for Christians, baptism as a symbolic death that gives life), the practice takes on profound religious significance.

"Torture has many forms, but torture by water as it arose in the Roman Catholic and Protestant reformations seemingly drew some of its power and inspiration from theological convictions about repentance and salvation. It was, we must now surely say, a horrific inversion of the best spirit of Christian faith and symbolism."

For my people and many others the story of torture by water does not end with the Inquisition, although many people were killed and wounded. We are still here. We still believe that adults can be trusted to decide about their faith. Anabaptists were among the forerunners of democracy where the people decide for themselves. The fact that we still exist demonstrates that the instruments of torture failed to eradicate us. In my people's reexamination of the gospel through those 500 years, we have come to the conviction that Jesus' teachings about enemy loving is not a teaching that can be temporarily suspended for purposes of emergency public policy. Our refusal to take up arms has gotten some of my people killed too, even in this country over the last 300 years, but not as many as the dangerous idea of baptizing adults 500 years ago.

So now I appeal to you in the name of God and in the name of our country that seeks to be a light to the nations to cast off the vestiges of the Spanish Inquisition. I appeal to you to bring policy out of the shadows of torture into a place where humans can make adult decisions. Could we agree to just try not being a nation that practices torture for the next 100 years, and see if such a consistent public policy brings us closer to a culture of hope on our planet? TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Election year musings**—David A. Shank
- **Lost sons: remembering Clayton Kratz**—Judy Clemens

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

MCC board confronts 'dissatisfaction'

Mennonite Central Committee hopes for new organization plan by 2009.

That there is "a fair bit of dissatisfaction" among its members and supporters over the "unwieldiness" of an organization that takes a minimum of six months to approve decisions—assuming all 12 boards are in agreement from the beginning—was acknowledged by Arli Klassen at the June annual Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) binational board meeting at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont.

Klassen, the fourth executive director in the past three years, introduced "New Wine, New Wineskins," a new initiative that she hopes will allow MCC to reinvent itself.

Under Klassen's leadership and the guidance of a nine-person steering committee, a 25-person inquiry task force will address three core questions with the broader MCC constituency next year: What is MCC's purpose? To whom is MCC accountable? How should MCC structure itself?

Three "summits" are planned: one in the Philippines in late July, one in Winnipeg in September and another in Kansas next June—as well as at least 16 regional meetings. A Web site to post feedback (mcc.org/NewWineskins) will be available at the end of July.

It is hoped the process will provide a new "shared statement of vision, mission, values and strategic priorities," a pamphlet states, as well as transformed relationships between MCC and its stakeholders and recommendations for the restructuring.

Klassen said there is a commitment to have the hoped-for outcomes in place before the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Paraguay next July.

A current memorandum of understanding between the 12 MCCs that allows the binational board "the freedom to assign program administration ... to one of the national MCCs," and MCC Canada has asked to administer programming in Iran, Cuba, Afghanistan and North Korea.

The MCC binational executive board has granted MCC Canada the go-ahead in all but Iran.

In a discussion, where it was noted that MCC has a higher profile with the Vietnamese government than does the Vietnamese Mennonite Church, Elizabeth Soto Albrecht, member-at-large, said churches around the world have matured and are ready to take charge of their own programming.

As if to underline the need for more work on gender and racial equity in both hiring and governance, Klassen read an apology to Kathy Jackson, recently resigned human resources director and a woman of color. The apology noted that elements of racism and sexism continue in the structures of MCC.

In a discussion on another internal issue, the need for executive members to take 17 days a year away from work and to pay for expenses in advance and then claim them back was seen as a hardship for many who are not able to make such time commitments or who do not have the funds to pay up front.

Speakers all noted that MCC is willing to change and move toward equity, but that much work is needed by the majority of Euro-North American members to learn what inequity is and how they contribute to it.

While a draft equity policy contains percentage goals for both gender and racial membership on boards and the executive, many from minority communities spoke against such goals and instead called for education of all MCC communities.

MCC has an intriguing problem. It does not want to have more than four months operating capital in reserve. However, due to increasing levels of donations—from Canada in particular—and with the Canadian dollar at par, it has over six months in reserve.

We are cash rich, but people poor.—Ryan Showalter

To deal with this "problem," a temporary expansion in programming has been authorized to spend nearly $8 million over the next few years.

Despite the extra cash on hand, Ron Flaming, director of international program development, notes staffing figures are in decline. In 1985, there were 496 MCC personal serving overseas, but only 245 today, he points out.

"We are cash rich, but people poor," says Ryan Showalter of Lancaster Mennonite (Pa.) Conference.

As the culmination of the other 11 MCC annual meetings through the year, issues that come to the binational meeting have been worked through by staff and regional MCCs, and in many ways the binational session is a final test of consensus.

One such issue was an action item brought forward by MCC's human resources department regarding salary ratio changes. In order to attract trained and experienced staff to upper level management positions, the ratio was changed from three times the lowest-paid staff level to five times (a 66 percent increase).—*Tim Miller Dyck, Ross Muir and Dave Rogalsky for Meetinghouse*

All-boards meeting looks at proposal

Most Mennonite Church USA agencies ask Executive Board to "slow down"

According to an Executive Board draft statement released on June 20, the current boards for Mennonite Church USA agencies would be dissolved in July 2009 and replaced with one Leadership Board.

The statement was released at an all-boards meeting in Columbus, Ohio, June 20-22; the gathering included the boards of Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA), Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Education Agency (MEA), Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN), Mennonite Health Services Alliance and the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

At the meeting, most table discussion groups requested that the Executive Board slow down—or halt altogether—the restructuring process. Table groups also expressed apprehensions: the need and timing for the change, the "overconfidence" of the Executive Board, and the "managerial" aspect of a one-board model.

Arlan Yoder, board chair of MMA, said that "the train has already left" and asked the Executive Board to stop the train and "bring it back to the station."

In response, Mennonite Church USA moderator Sharon Waltner said she sees the train stopping along the way and others getting on. After the meeting she cited examples of these "stops" as Executive Board meetings in September, January and April, the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) meeting in October and meetings with agency boards and other "stakeholder" groups. (On June 22, the Executive Board decided to "defer" the plan. See page 21)

Compositon of proposed Leadership Board

7	Churchwide members (including moderator and moderator-elect)
4	One member from each of the four current MC USA agencies
3	Conference representatives—one each from large, medium and small conferences
2	One from MCC/MDS and one from MEDA selected by the other members of the Leadership Board
4	People nominated through the Leadership Discernment Committee for the Racial/Ethnic groups
1	Person from Mennonite Health Services Alliance
21	TOTAL

The Executive Board's June 20 statement called for an integrated communications and funding system that includes *The Mennonite*, a church-wide operations staff person and one Leadership Board.

The proposed Leadership Board, comprised of 21 people, would lead Mennonite Church USA starting after the July 2009 delegate assembly in Columbus. The Leadership Board would be comprised of the following members: seven churchwide members, one member from each current agency, three conference representatives, one from Mennonite Central Committee or Mennonite Disaster Service, one from Mennonite Economic Development Associates, four from the Racial/Ethnic groups and one from Mennonite Health Services Alliance (see box).

The June 20 draft stipulated that no less than two members must be under 35 years of age when they begin their terms. Twenty-five percent would be underrepresented racial/ethnic people, 40 percent female and 40 percent male. During a two-year phase-in period from 2009-2011, the current boards would serve in advisory roles to the new Leadership Board.

The communications and fund-raising system would be led by one director. The current board of *The Mennonite* would evolve into an editorial board.

Joe Lapp, Mennonite Publishing Network board member, said MPN may benefit from the proposed structure. The Mennonite Mission Network board was the most directly opposed to the proposal.

"We affirm the Executive Board in taking leadership and holding up its vision," said Bill Hochstetler, Mennonite Mission Network's board chair, "[But] the Mennonite Mission Network board is in a very different place than the Executive Board on how to accomplish the desired outcomes. We desire real board-to-board dialogue. We propose a collaborative effort among the Executive Board, agencies, *The Mennonite* and CLC to achieve the desired outcome."

James Rosenberger, board chair of MEA, said after the meeting, "We believe the educational mission which the MEA has been entrusted to fulfill, is central to the heart of the missional focus of MC USA. We interpret the EB proposal to move the agency educational mission to the center as supportive of this view, but believe coordinated, autonomous agencies led by the EB may be more effective."—*Anna Groff*

Executive Board defers one-board idea

Deferral is contingent on "alternative route" and progress toward goals.

Following the June 20 Columbus, Ohio, meeting (see page 20) of all Mennonite Church USA boards of directors—in which participants were presented a draft of a plan to improve churchwide structures—the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board on June 22 adopted a statement by a unanimous vote.

The statement reads, "At this time, we are ready to defer the model of one leadership board, provided that we can find an alternative route for integrating our churchwide priorities and can make progress on reaching the communications, development and operations goals outlined in the working draft of our earlier plan."

The "earlier plan" was a working draft circulated to agency boards and boards of directors for *The Mennonite* and Mennonite Health Services (MHS) Alliance June 19. That plan, refined by the Executive Board during its meetings June 19, further clarified details of the Executive Board's plan to integrate and simplify churchwide structures.

After listening to boards' concerns, the Executive Board felt the need to reevaluate the draft.

"We have heard many requests for slowing down this process and that more collaboration is possible without forming one board," said Sharon Waltner, moderator. "We are ready to take a 'wait-and-see' attitude, provided we can find ways to begin work immediately on our goals of making the resources of the denomination more accessible to all of its members."

The Executive Board's statement of response affirms the dialogue shared among the boards and expresses gratitude to participants' calls for the Executive Board "to demonstrate visionary and inspirational leadership." The statement also points to a need for "clear accountability of agency board leadership to Executive Board leadership and upon the accountability of agency executive directors to the executive director of Mennonite Church USA."

According to the statement, the Executive Board plans to continue working on the areas of an integrated communication and development system and one churchwide operations person.

Regarding the concept of one leadership board for the agencies, Executive Leadership and *The Mennonite*, the Executive Board continues to believe this approach would be the best option for effectively reaching denominational goals and serving area conferences and congregations. However, the board is "ready to defer" on the model to see whether progress can be made toward its goal in other ways.

In its previous communication regarding its plan, the Executive Board regarded communication and funding as two separate functions within its strategy. Based on its conversations and input from staff and constituency, the board determined that combining funding and communications into a communications and development system could best serve congregations and conferences. This system would have one leader, a director of communications and development.

The Mennonite would be included in this system under the functions of communications and news. The proposal anticipates that the current board of directors for The Mennonite, Inc., would evolve into an editorial board.

The churchwide operations staff person would be charged with overseeing the development of budgets for all churchwide ministries and making sure that those ministries use resources wisely, "in ways which are appropriate, effective and consistent with the mission, vision and priorities of the leadership board."

The Executive Board's statement highlights that "all of this agenda will be primary work for our board and staff and we will continue to assess whether we have made sufficient progress toward our vision, missional and intent and commitments." The Executive Board will release a revised and working draft of its plan "soon," the statement says.

> We have heard ... that more collaboration is possible without forming one board.
> —Sharon Waltner

At its February meeting in San Antonio, the Executive Board said current relationships, behaviors and structures do not adequately support the church's vision. In March, following a meeting of agency board chairs and executive directors, the Executive Board announced that it saw integrated communication and funding structures, a staff person to ensure stewardship of church resources and one board of directors as the specific areas it would explore to address what it perceived as dysfunctions within the church system.

The Constituency Leaders Council provided feedback at its early April meeting in Mt. Pleasant, Pa. In the weeks between the CLC meeting and the all-boards meeting, members of the Executive Board listened to leaders from across the church—such as executive conference ministers, young adults, Racial/Ethnic leaders, constituency groups, women and others—to seek counsel on how best to move forward. The Executive Board plans to continue working with area conferences, the CLC and Racial/Ethnic groups as the process moves forward.—*Marathana Prothro of Mennonite Church USA*

Note: The entire release from which this article was drawn is available at www.themennonite.org

Churches connect with Ghana, Honduras

Half of Allegheny Mennonite Conference churches are involved in mission trips.

Photo provided

Laurie Scudder visits with a girl in Honduras.

Global connections for Allegheny Mennonite Conference churches are new for some and old for others, but a priority for many. According to Kurt Horst, moderator of AMC, 20 congregations (69 percent) give to mission projects. Thirteen congregations—almost half of AMC congregations—are involved in mission trips.

Honduras

Cathy Chapman, a nurse practitioner from Pinto (Md.) Mennonite Church, has been leading medical trips to Honduras for almost a decade.

The most recent one, May 9-19, was by a team from three churches: Glade Mennonite, Accident, Md.; Springs (Pa.) Mennonite; and Pinto Mennonite. The nine-woman team traveled to Las Vegas, Honduras through the MAMA Project, Inc. The MAMA Project, *Mujeres Amigas Miles Apart* (Women Friends Miles Apart), is a Mennonite-based organization in Pennsburg, Pa.

Chapman first went to Honduras in 1997 after meeting a nun who had been there and invited her to join her for the following spring.

"I was hooked on Honduras," she said after her most recent trip. "I knew that this was what I wanted to do but for various reasons I wanted to go with a different group, preferably Mennonite."

This year's team consisted of Chapman and an LPN nurse providing primary care.

"We work usually out of schools," she said, "but have set up clinics in churches, under tents or trees."

The other six people on the team distributed vitamin A and de-parasiting medicine. They also did puppet shows for the children.

"Those of us who have gone to Honduras," Chapman said, "are changed by what we have seen and experienced and shared the pictures and stories with others. A picture truly speaks 1,000 words. There is no way you can see a picture of a 2-year-old child who weighs eight pounds and not be moved."

Other AMC congregations with connections to Honduras through various organizations are: Blough Mennonite and Thomas Mennonite, both in Hollsopple, Pa.; Meadow Mountain Mennonite, Swanton, Md.; Pittsburgh Mennonite; and Cornerstone Fellowship of Mill Run, Altoona, Pa.

Ghana

This year, two congregations embarked for the first time on the journey to connect with Mennonites in Ghana. It all started when Mennonite Mission Network, the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA, brought two congregations together—University Mennonite Church (UMC) in State College, Pa., and Maple Grove Mennonite in Belleville, Pa.—alerting both of their shared goal to make global connections.

Mennonite Mission Network gets the credit for making this connection, says Liz Hunsberger, trip member from UMC. Only 25 miles apart, the churches still would not have found each other.

Alan Kauffman, pastor of Maple Grove, says he wanted Maple Grove members to have an opportunity to witness and experience another part of the world.

"Given the fact that the African church is growing leaps and bounds," Kauffman says, "we have a lot to learn from Christians in that area."

The group traveled to Ghana May 3-13 and stayed at the Good News Theological Seminary, which is affiliated with the African-indigenous church and connected to Mennonite Mission Network.

In addition to meeting and worshiping with Ghanaian people, the group met with the board of governors of the institution about starting a long-term partnership.

Thomas Oduro, director of the institute, plans to attend an AMC gathering in fall 2009.

Kauffman says they hope to have a joint worship service with Maple Grove and UMC during this time. The team also plans to formalize an agreement for a long-term partnership with the institution in Ghana.

Hunsberger said the team has considered making this connection with Ghana a conference-wide endeavor.—*Anna Groff*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

Note: A longer version of this article and additional photos are available at www.themennonite.org.

Dream happens for Hispanic church plant

Bethany House Mennonite Church held first Spanish-speaking service March 30

For years, Rosa Flores searched for someone who could begin a Spanish-speaking Mennonite church in the Newton, Kan., area. It wasn't until she recognized herself as that person that the long-held dream came true.

Rosa supported her husband, Gilberto Flores, in his various leadership roles within Mennonite Church USA after they moved from Guatemala to Kansas in the mid-1990s. She also dreamt of worshiping in her native language, Spanish, with other Latinos who hungered for the same.

One day, it was Gilberto's turn to support her leadership gifts. During the conversation they'd had many times, with Rosa voicing her desires, he challenged her to step out in faith to do what she dreamt of others doing. Then the seed of *Iglesia Menonita Casa Betania* (Bethany House Mennonite Church) took root in her heart. She eventually became one of the founders of the new Newton Hispanic church plant, which held its first Sunday service March 30.

"There are Spanish-speaking churches in the community, and I'd gone to each one," says Rosa, a member of First Mennonite Church in Newton. "But none of them felt like mine. I had been a Mennonite for more than 30 years, and I wanted to worship in Spanish where it felt like I belonged."

She discussed her husband's challenge with her good friend and work supervisor, Norma Stoltzfus, a Mennonite who moved from Puerto Rico to Kansas 33 years ago. Stoltzfus sensed God calling her to join Flores. Like Flores, she explored many worship options before she became a member of Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, Kan. A Spanish-speaking group met at Whitestone for about 10 years before it discontinued.

The women's faith, with support of other founders, such as Irma Gonzales and Violeta Ajquejay, revitalized the hopes of Newton's five Mennonite congregations and Western District Conference (WDC), the sponsoring area conference from Mennonite Church USA. Exploratory meetings began in late fall 2007 and culminated with the spring start.

Flores and Stoltzfus co-lead Sunday worship and Thursday Bible studies for a handful of eager participants. They worship in a house which sits next to First Mennonite Church, which recently purchased the property.

First Mennonite is one of Casa Betania's three sister congregations, with Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, and Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan. They support Casa Betania financially with WDC. Faith Mennonite Church and New Creation Fellowship, both in Newton, also lend prayer and moral support.

Laurie Oswald Robinson

From left, Norma Stoltzfus and Rosa Flores, two of the church founders, fellowship during a Bible study at Iglesia Menonita Casa Betania (Bethany House Mennonite Church), the new Spanish-speaking church plant in Newton.

Their vision has spread beyond Kansas to Nebraska, where Jaime Cazares, of Omaha, a church planter, was contacted about Casa Betania. He has been invited by the new congregation and WDC to become part-time pastor June 15. He is moving to Newton with his wife, Suhelen.

This church plant dispels the perception that south Texas, the region in WDC flourishing in Hispanic church plants, is the only place where such ministries can grow, says Dorothy Nickel Friesen, WDC conference minister.

The church plant also highlights another misperception about Newton, known for being a Mennonite "mecca" settled by Mennonite immigrants from Europe, she says. Hispanics have been a significant part of the Newton community for a century, first arriving as railroad workers in 1905, 30 years after the migration of Russian Mennonites to south central Kansas.

"This church plant is not only about a 30-year-old dream come true, but is a 100-plus-year-old story that hasn't often been recognized," she says. "We've lived side-by-side with Hispanics for a long time. But we haven't honored our multicultural community in our attitudes about worship.

"We tell Hispanics they are welcome in our churches, and yet we often want them to sound and look like us. We haven't recognized the very deep and visceral thing that happens when people are worshiping in their native language. It's not a matter of style, or of right and wrong. It's a way of recognizing the multiple languages of God."—*Laurie Oswald Robinson is a freelance writer and photographer from Newton, Kan.*

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

- •Editor@TheMennonite.org
- •fax 574-535-6050
- •1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

CALENDAR

Pittsburgh Mennonite Church 40th anniversary celebration, Oct. 4-5, 2008. Contact 412-421-8007 about attending or send memories and stories to kenthechurchfly@yahoo.com.

Mennonite Graduate Student Conference: The Church, Aug. 7-9, **Eastern Mennonite University,** Harrisonburg, Va., sponsored by the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre. For more information, including registration, see http://grebel.uwaterloo.ca/tmtc/events.shtml.

WORKERS

DiGerlando, Carl A., was licensed as teacher of youth and family life at Maranatha Christian Fellowship, Nazareth, Pa., on April 20.

Eberly, Peter, was ordained as youth pastor at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., on April 27.

Hershberger Henderson, Joann, was licensed for special ministries at Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va., on June 1. Joann is licensed for community-based pastoral counseling ministry in the Broadway/Timberville area of Virginia.

Horst, Rodney C., was licensed as deacon at Weaverland Mennonite Church, East Earl, Pa., on Feb. 10.

Johnson, Jesse, was ordained at Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, D.C., on June 15.

King, David, was licensed for special ministry at Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va., on June 15.

Martin, Irvin L., retired Jan. 31 from overseer of the Bowmansville-Reading District of Lancaster Mennonite Conference.

Selzer, Eldon, was licensed for preaching ministry at Chestnut Hill Mennonite Church, Columbia, Pa., on April 20.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Brubaker, Norah Grace, May 18, to Eric and Peggy Sterling Brubaker, Harrisonburg, Va.

Dick-Burkey, Elliana Kay, June 12, to Jayme and Anna Dick-Burkey, Lincoln, Neb.

Diener, Daphne Almeda and Andrea Danae (twins), April 4, to Daniel and Lynn Diener, Goshen, Ind.

Dorsing, Nathen Franz, May 10, to Jeromy and Elizabeth Gearhart Dorsing, Columbia Heights, Minn.

Enns, Jacob David, born May 6, received for adoption May 2008 by David and Ashley Enns, Whitewater, Kan.

Fairfield, Elisabeth Violet, June 13, to Peter and Bethany Versluis Fairfield, Harrisonburg, Va.

Gimmel, Joshua Jeffrey, May 2, to Gregor and Tiffany Book Gimmel, Ottenbach, Switzerland.

Graber-Nofziger, Nina, June 12, to Jon Nofziger and Katie Graber, Columbus, Ohio.

Hughes, Amelia Catherine, June 11, to David and Amanda Hylton Hughes, Weyers Cave, Va.

Hummer, Ella Louise and Ian Paul (twins), April 28, to Trent and Cara Derstine Hummel, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Hylkema, Kingston Mackennen, May 23, to Andy and Renee Brooks Hylkema, Goshen, Ind.

Kauffman, Oliver Armon, Feb. 29, to Jason and Shelley Habusta Kauffman, Goshen, Ind.

Ladd, Sophie Jayne, May 23, to Nick and Shari Grieser Ladd, Hudson, Mich.

Lantz, Seth Elias Kaczor, June 3, to Steven Lantz and Dawn Kaczor, Denver, Colo.

Morford, Kwynn Lavelle, June 6, to Lonnie and Kendra Sieber Morford, Hesston, Kan.

Moyer, Elias Swartzendruber, June 7, to Jonathan and Rachel Swartzendruber Moyer, Denver, Colo.

Reeves, Charlotte Amelia, May 20, to Greg and Jill Schultz Reeves, Andover, Kan.

Roth, Landon Roy, May 16, to Tony and Jodi Erb Roth, Milford, Neb.

Schneider, Quincy Jay, June 7, to Matt and Andrea Crilow Schneider, Canton, Ohio.

Thomas, Jessa Renee and Jaydn Taylor (twins), June 5, to Doug and Shawn Kiehl Thomas, Milford, Neb.

Vlastis, Sasha Marguerite, May 9, to Stacy Vlastis and Jennifer Graber, Wooster, Ohio

VonGunten, Molly Grace, May 28, to Doug and Jolene Hostetler VonGunten, Goshen, Ind.

MARRIAGES

Balzer/Brimm: Rachel Balzer, Whitewater, Kan., and Mylin Brimm, East St. Louis, Ill., May 31, at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater.

Blessing/Siegrist: Joshua Blessing, Lancaster, Pa., and Rosemary Siegrist, Lancaster, June 8, at Landis Valley Farm Museum, Lancaster.

Christophel/Stoltzfus: Jonathan Christophel, Washington, D.C., and Carrie Stoltzfus, Washington, D.C., May 31, in Parkesburg, Pa.

Funk/Gingerich: Susanna Funk, Dallas Center, Iowa, and Stephen Gingerich, Parnell, Iowa, May 24, at Church of the Brethren, Dallas Center.

King/Skyrm: Brian King, Goshen, Ind., and Andrea Skyrm, Goshen, May 31, at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Klaassen/Kohlman: Megan Klaassen, Whitewater, Kan., and Brad Kohlman, Augusta, Kan., June 7, at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater.

Klassen/Wray: Stephanie Klassen, Moundridge, Kan., and Matthew Wray, Newton, Kan., May 31, at Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

Leaman/Miller: Jared Leaman, Harrisonburg, Va., and Adrianne "Addie" Miller, Middlebury, Ind., June 7, at Amigo Centre, Sturgis, Mich.

Specializing in web development
and customized software

Ten Thousand Villages || Learn about fair trade, find unique gift ideas & purchase
http://www.tenthousandvillages.com/
Customer Assistance | My Account | Basket
Enter Keyword
Search
Place your order by phone at 1-877-883-8341
TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES.
SHOP
GIFT IDEAS
COLLECTIONS
GIFT REGISTRY
ARTISANS
FAIR TRADE
STORES & FESTIVALS
Home › Shop › Plant & Garden

LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

Maldonado/Riguelme: Pether Maldonado, Wauseon, Ohio, and Asuncion Riguelme, Wauseon, June 7, at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Maust/Weaver: Adam Maust, Hartville, Ohio, and Bethany Weaver, Hartville, June 8, at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Hartville.

Merrick/Neufeld: Christopher Merrick, Springdale, Ark., and Jill Neufeld, Inman, Kan., June 7, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Nussbaum/Ulery: Kendal Nussbaum, Phoenix, Ariz., and Jacki Ulery, Phoenix, June 8, at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

DEATHS

Basler, Pauline Miller Kandel, 94, Orrville, Ohio, died June 8. Spouse: Paul Basler (deceased). Spouse: Walter E. Kandel (deceased). Parents: William L. and Jemima Troyer Miller. Children: Art Kandel, Dorcas Lemon, Judy Wise, Rita Jean Atkinson, Susan Weaver; 17 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: June 13 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville.

Blosser, Eugene Edward, 91, Wellman, Iowa, died June 8. Spouse: Elsie Zook Blosser. Spouse: Louella Blosser (deceased). Parents: Perry and Ada V. Lahman Blosser. Children: Philip, Rachel Blosser Derstine, Meiko Blosser Schoemig, Thomas Yoshiro; eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 9 at Wellman Mennonite Church.

Boehnert, Addison Laurin, 96, Lyndhurst, Va., died May 25. Spouse: Ressie Margaret Harner Boehnert (deceased). Spouse: Lena Nitz Morris Boehnert (deceased). Parents: Gustav A. and Mary Clara Laurin Boehnart. Grandchildren: one grandchild; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 28 at Reynolds Hamrick Funeral Home, Waynesboro, Va.

Boettger, Edith Yoder, 86, Tofield, Alberta, died May 27. Spouse: Marvin Boettger. Parents: David L. and Lacinda Stauffer Yoder. Children: Derril, Elwood, Val; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 31 at Salem Mennonite Church, Tofield.

Bontrager, Ora C., 85, Goshen, Ind., died June 15 following an extended illness. Spouse: Katie Eash Bontrager. Spouse: Anna Kauffman Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Christian and Mary Ann Miller Bontrager. Children: Deloris Hostetler, DeWayne; five grandchildren. Funeral: June 18 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Brenneman, Virgil J., 86, Goshen, Ind., died June 10. Spouse: Helen Good Brenneman (deceased). Parents: Ephraim and Anna Christner Brenneman. Children: Tobi Goldfus, Beki Denman, Don, John, Loretta Birkey; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 14 at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Britsch, Irene M. Wyse, 93, Archbold, Ohio, died May 31. Spouse: Olen Britsch (deceased). Parents: William and Dinah Roth Wyse. Children: Calvin, Maretta Buller; five grandchildren. Funeral: June 3 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Cordell, Mary K. Appleby, 89, Chambersburg, Pa., died April 5. Spouse: Glenn A. Cordell. Parents: James A. and Georgia M. Hollinger Appleby. Children: Glenn R., Leonard A.; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 9 at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS
FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED
THE CHILDREN OF GOD. – MATTHEW 5:9
GOSHEN COLLEGE
WWW.GOSHEN.EDU/PEACE

Goshen College's Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies program is built on decades of scholarship, a unique and nationally admired study-abroad program, a community that seeks diversity and Christ-centered core values rooted in the peace church tradition.

You might choose a major or a minor in a peace studies program, enhance another area of study wtih conflict mediation training, sign up for a semester of urban peacemaking study in Indianapolis, join the Pax or Eco-Pax student clubs and engage significant issues with guest speakers as well as your own professors and classmates.

We invite you to visit out welcoming campus to find out more – on your journey as a peacemaker.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

Eichelberger, Wilbert H., 87, Hopedale, Ill., died June 3. Parents: Henry and Susanna Bechler Eichelberger. Funeral: June 7 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Gering, Barbara Elizabeth Sattler, 76, Freeman, S.D., died May 13. Spouse: Darryl "Bud" Gering. Parents: Henry and Susanna Sattler. Children: Pam Gering, Pat Vlien, Deb Gering, Mark; three grandchildren, one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 16 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Goebel, Verta Gordon Cox, 91, Moundridge, Kan., died May 29. Spouse: Marvin Goebel (deceased). Parents: Mose and Nora Crumrine Cox. Children: Marilyn Stucky, Jerroll, Roger, James, Ronald, Gordon; 14 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 2 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.

Gonzalez, Luis A., 78, Mohnton, Pa., died May 30. Spouse: H. Theda Bitler Gonzalez. Parents: Felix R. and Fausta Santiago Gonzalez. Children: Luis R., Luis A. Jr., Michael, Brenda Sensenig, Juanita Kreider, Teresa Breasette, Maria Boyd; 21 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 7 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Groff, Dorothy L. Hernley, 86, Ephrata, Pa., died May 30. Spouse: Samuel S. Groff (deceased). Parents: Levi W. and Mary Musser Hernley. Children: J. Lamar, Larry, Lynn, Leslie; 15 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 5 at Fairmount Homes, Inc., Ephrata.

Hertzler, Evelyn Groff, 70, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 3. Spouse: Don Hertzler. Parents: J. Elvin and Mary Groff. Children: Barry, Jerry, Sandy Byler; seven grandchildren. Funeral: June 8 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Hostetler, Ruth M. Beisel, 74, Hollsopple, Pa., died June 18 of cancer. Spouse: Leon Hostetler. Parents: Clair and Mildred Beisel. Children: Diane Yoder, Doretta Dorsch, Galene Ronald, Gail Matthews; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 21 at Blough Mennonite Church, Hollsopple.

Kurtz, Wayne D., 87, Smithville, Ohio, died June 13 following a short illness. Spouse: Frances E. Blough Kurtz (deceased). Parents: Simon D. and Frannie Musser Kurtz. Children: Duane, Rebecca Kandell, Rindy Morphew; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 18 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville.

Landis, Anna S. Leakway, 91, Lancaster, Pa., died June 3 following a brief illness. Spouse: John S. Landis (deceased). Parents: Murray A. and Jane Smith Leakway. Children: John L., David L., Mary Ann Ogburn; seven grandchildren; three step-grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; step great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 9 at East Petersburg Mennonite Church, East Petersburg, Pa.

Lehman, Gilbert, 84, Croghan, N.Y., died April 27. Spouse: Esther Roggie Lehman. Parents: Elmer and Rosella Roggie Lehman. Children: Paul, Tim, David, Walter, Kathy Widrick; 10 grandchildren; 5 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 2 at Croghan Mennonite Church.

Leichty, David Franklin, Jr., 74, Goshen, Ind., died May 18 of a head injury sustained in a fall. Spouse: Carolyn Grace Yoder Leichty. Parents: David Franklin, Sr., and Helen Dorothy Yoder Leichty; Diane Lewandowski, Pamela Allen, Linda Snyder; seven grandchildren. Funeral: May 22 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Leichty, Helen Dorothy Yoder, 97, Goshen, Ind., died March 31 of coronary artery disease. Spouse: David Franklin Leichty (deceased). Parents: Jacob G. and Iva Grace Yoder Yoder. Children: Genevieve Schwartzentruber, Delia Herr, Warren, Evelyn Hostetler, Katherine Lou Mullet, David Franklin Jr., Samuel Benjamin; 17 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Martin, David B., 61, Ephrata, Pa., died May 12. Spouse: Ella Mae Martin Martin. Parents: Samuel B. and Annie H. Burkholder Martin. Children: Michelle Glick, David; one grandchild. Funeral: May 17 at Groffdale Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Meyers, Connie Gahman, 46, Wysox, Pa., died June 2. Spouse: William Meyers. Parents: George Edward and Miriam Alderfer Gahman. Children: Eric, Nicholas, Felicia, Michael. Funeral: June 7 at Blooming Glen Mennonite Church, Blooming Glen, Pa.

Miller, Orval, 87, Wayland, Iowa, died June 11. Spouse: Alberta M. Boese Miller. Parents: Amasa and Katy Reschly Miller. Children: Stanley L., Steven J., Sheldon R., Lucy A. Leichty; 11 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 14 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Miller, Robert L., 81, Smithville, Ohio, died June 10. Spouse: Mary Ellen Hamsher Miller. Parents: Ervin and Eva Miller Miller. Children: Carol Wyant, Mark, Miriam Halterman, Ken, Rose Lehman; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: June 15 at Smithville Mennonite Church.

Musser, Etta Heller Weaver, 91, New Holland, Pa., died April 28 of cancer. Spouse: Jacob Hertzler Musser. Parents: David H. and Cora Heller Weaver. Children: Dorothy Weaver, Ruth Mae Lapp, Roy, Janice Wyble, James, Jacob; 16 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 1 at New Holland Mennonite Church.

Myers, Nora Lynne, 7 months, Keezletown, Va., died June 4 as a result of a progressive illness. Parents: Jason and Janelle Myers-Benner. Sister: Kali Jean Myers. Memorial service: June 7 at Eastern Mennonite Seminary's Martin Chapel.

Nafziger, Erma Katherine Litwiller, 96, Hopedale, Ill., died June 8. Spouse: Vilas L. Nafziger (deceased). Parents: Amos and Barbara Ann Nafziger Litwiller. Children: Marlene Birky, Barbara Frantz, Shirley Brunk, John, Keith; 12 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 12 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Oesch, Mary Lapp, 94, Kalispell, Mont., died May 24. Spouse: Harold Oesch (deceased). Parents: Frank and Lena Kauffman Lapp. Children: Shirley Brenneman, Donald, Duane, Glen; 16 grandchildren; 39 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 27 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Kalispell.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business.

Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.
timely tip:
Check your smoke alarms!

Oyer, Ruth V. Hieser, 90, Fisher, Ill., died May 28. Spouse: Leslie C. Oyer (deceased). Parents: John and Mary Cender Hieser. Children: Carolyn Miller, Nan Cagle, Kandy Beesley, Kathy Dennemann; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 1 at Dewey Evangelical Mennonite Church, Dewey, Ill.

Petri, Edith Gerda Franz, 76, Goshen, Ind., died May 11. Spouse: Hans Petri (deceased). Parents: Walter Erwin and Kate Kliewer Franz. Children: Friedrich "Fred," Annette Anderle; three grandchildren. Memorial service: June 7 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Rosenberger, Abram Garges, 89, Souderton, Pa., died May 9. Spouse: Kathryn High Rosenberger. Parents: Henry and Lydya Garges Rosenberger. Children: Kathy Moyer, Donald; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 15 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Schlabach, Daniel D., 82, Winesburg, Ohio, died May 4. Spouse: Retha F. Miller Schlabach. Parents: Daniel E. and Amanda Yoder Schlabach. Children: Dave, Brad, Brenda Sweany, Jim; eight grandchildren. Funeral: May 7 at Longenecker Mennonite Church, Windesburg.

Stilwell, Harvey, 57, Lancaster, Pa., died June 14. Graveside service: June 19 at Mellinger Mennonite Cemetery, Lancaster.

Stuckey, Anna M. Graber, 96, Archbold, Ohio, died May 31. Spouse: Clarence Stuckey (deceased). Parents: Elias and Nancy Goldsmith Graber. Children: Roger; two grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 4 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Stuckey, Berneda Mae Nofziger, 88, West Unity, Ohio, died June 13. Spouse: Joseph Stuckey (deceased). Parents: William B. and Clara Beck Nofziger. Children: Wyman, Max, Timothy, Rita Detwiler; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Wenger, Dr. Marlin E., Manheim Township, Pa., died April 26 of pancreatic cancer. Spouse: Jane Arlene Idell Wenger. Parents: Samuel Stoner Wenger and Ella Mae Esbenshade Wenger. Children: Brent I., Maria K. Wenger Kois, Chad; three grandchildren. Funeral: May 3 at Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Wissler, Marian V. Groff, 89, Lititz, Pa., died April 30. Spouse: Eugene Wissler (deceased). Parents: Noah and Esther Hoover Groff. Step-children: Reid E., J. Glenn, Harold B., Clyde B.; 11 step-grandchildren; 21 step great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 5 at Landis Homes West Bethany Chapel, Lititz.

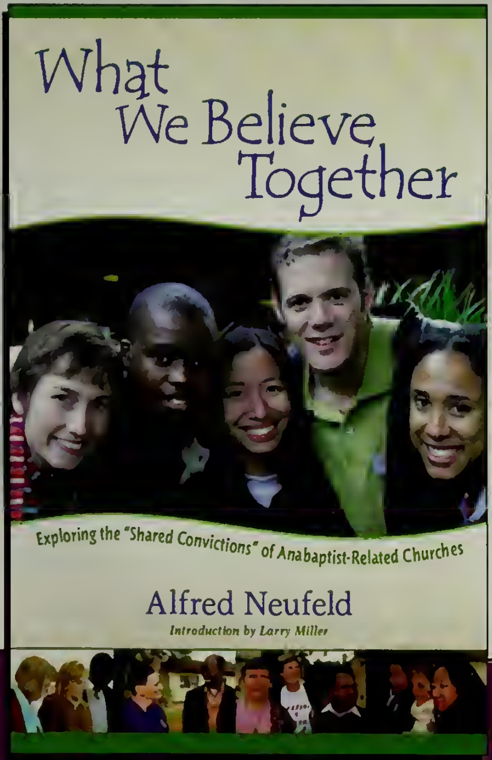
Wyse, Eldon Duane, 82, Wayland, Iowa, died June 2. Spouse: Pauline Boshart Wyse. Parents: Samuel and Emma Saltzman Wyse. Children: Michael, Pamela Hoylman; one grandson. Funeral: June 5 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Yoder, Harold A., 93, Middlebury, Ind., died May 21. Spouse: Erma E. Sigler Yoder (deceased). Parents: David E. and Lizzie Troyer Yoder. Children: Miriam Kauffman, Glen; one grandson; four step-grandchildren; nine step great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 24 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Yoder, Timothy "Tom" Thomas, 67, Archbold, Ohio, died June 11 of cancer. Spouse: Glora Belle Rychener Yoder. Parents: Timothy T. and Lucille Eicher Yoder. Children: Ty, Heather Myers, Ryan, Justin; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Zerger, Esther Regier, 89, McPherson, Kan., died April 2. Spouse: Paul Zerger (deceased). Parents: Bernhard and Auguste Epp Regier. Children: Joanne Janzen, Joe, Richard, Frances Hochstetler; 12 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 5 at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.

EVERY MENNONITE SHOULD READ THIS BOOK


What We Believe Together
Exploring the "Shared Convictions" of Anabaptist-Related Churches
Alfred Neufeld
Introduction by Larry Miller

Today, more than 1.5 million Christians are members of Mennonite-related churches. They are scattered in 67 countries. They trace their history to the Anabaptist movement, a part of the 16th century Radical Reformation in Europe.

So what beliefs do these heirs of the free-church movement, only loosely connected to each other, hold in common today? This first-of-its-kind book, *What We Believe Together*, explores seven convictions shared by these churches.

A fresh and up-to-date look at the core beliefs, and the practices that have developed from them, held by Mennonite-related groups around the world today.

5½ x 8½ • 160 pages
$9.95, paperback • Group discounts available.

Published in cooperation with Mennonite World Conference

At local bookstores or directly from the publisher.
Call toll-free 800/762-7171 • P.O. Box 419,
Intercourse, PA 17534 • www.GoodBooks.com
Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and AmEx accepted.
Shipping/Handling, add 10% ($3.00 minimum).

Good Books

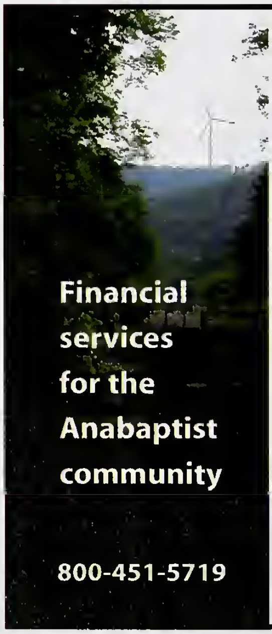
Eastern Mennonite Missions seeks ***full-time associate director of finance*** to carry responsibility for the deferred giving program and assist in overseeing EMM's loan portfolio. Qualifications include: bachelor's degree, five years accounting experience, and strong writing and oral communication skills. Begins Oct. 1, 2008; Application deadline Aug. 8. Contact Jeanette Hunt: jeanetteh@emm.org or 717-898-2251.

Community of Hope Tutoring Program, an afterschool outreach of Jubilee Mennonite Church in Meridian, Miss., is currently seeking a ***part-time program director***. Program director responsibilities include directing daily operation and development of tutoring program, overseeing the development of high school aged tutors, enrolling and supervising elementary students, maintaining relationships with parents, teachers and schools, and promoting the program and building relationships with the community. Qualified applicants should have teaching experience, administrative and organizational skills, self motivation, and calling to service. To apply, submit resumé to Community of Hope Tutoring Program, 812 28th Ave., Meridian, MS 39301, Attn: Director Search Committee.

Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa., is a Christian relief and development organization with a strong commitment to peacemaking. MCC is seeking qualified applicants for a ***human resources director*** to lead a 16-member department and facilitate a network of practitioners across the agency. A bachelor's degree and five years of personnel experience are required. A job description is available at www.mcc.org/serve. Send resumé and letter of interest to: MCC Human Resources, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501. Application review begins July 14.

Mennonite youth pastor, full-time position. For job description and congregational information form contact: Jim Cashdollar, **First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.**; 309-696-1943.

Landis Homes seeks ***director of maintenance*** for growing retirement community. Candidates shall have knowledge of all aspects of building and grounds maintenance and operations. Ability to supervise and coordinate the maintenance team to ensure compliance with applicable safety, fire regulations and building codes to provide a safe, comfortable environment for residents. Five years of supervisory experience in facilities management preferred. Send resumé to: Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 East Oregon Road, Lititz, PA 17543, or Fax: 717-581-3899, or Email: ssmoker@landishomes.org. For more information about Landis Homes, visit our Web site www.landishomes.org.



Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

'Living God's Generosity'

We make this financial education curriculum available free to congregations, schools, and individuals who want to work with young people and others in discussing finances and stewardship.

'Living God's Generosity': Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) of the Mennonite Church USA is seeking two full-time associate directors to provide leadership in supporting church-related education, preschool through seminary. Each position requires an applicant to be a committed Christian, active in a Mennonite Church USA congregation, willing to advocate for Mennonite education and experienced with working in a team environment and with developing networks. Job-specific requirements are listed below:

Full-time associate director, with a focus on elementary education, secondary education and research, will serve as the primary contact person for Mennonite Schools Council schools. Responsibilities include assistance with curriculum-building; advancement of relationships with member schools, area conferences and area churches; and assistance in providing or finding consultant help for MSC schools. Also, will work at overseeing and expanding the data collection, analysis and research function of MEA. A graduate degree, doctorate or equivalent degree is preferred. Experience with preK-12 education is required with experience in Mennonite schools preferred. Proven public communication skills are required.

Full-time associate director, with a focus on church relations and development, will serve as the primary contact person for Mennonite Church USA conferences and churches and is responsible for maintaining and advancing effective relationships with Mennonite Church USA conferences and structures. Responsibilities include regular presentations in schools and churches; attendance at annual meetings of conferences, consultations with schools; serving as the MEA representative in other settings and the development of strategic initiatives for fund-raising. A bachelor's degree is required; a graduate degree, doctorate or equivalent degree is preferred. Extensive experience in church relations and development work is also preferred.

To apply: Send cover letter, resumé, and four letters of recommendation (including one from your pastor and one from a recent supervisor) to Mennonite Education Agency, Search for Associate Director, 63846 County Road 35, Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46528-9621 or e-mail documents (in Microsoft Word format) to apply@mennoniteeducation.org.

AARM, a peace church-affiliated provider of insurance and risk management products and services, seeks ***commercial insurance account manager***. Successful candidate will be personable, detail-oriented team player with ability to work independently to service agency book of business and program business. Will handle reviews and some inside sales. Three to five years commercial insurance experience is required with first line underwriting experience a plus. Property and casualty license and insurance software proficiency is required. AARM offers competitive salaries, benefits and an energetic, forward looking environment. Please forward resumé and letter of qualification to our Consultants: North Group Consultants; Email: seberly@northgroupconsultants.com; Fax: 717-299-9300.

Eastern District Conference is seeking a self-motivated missional minded leader as ***new church development coordinator***, .25 FTE new position, able to recruit, coach and resource church planters and walk alongside established congregations open to reinventing their future. Salary and expenses compatible with MC USA salary guidelines, immediate opening. Send resumé to or contact Warren Tyson, 771 Route 113, Souderton, PA 18964, warrent@easterndistrict.org, 215-723-5513 x138, or 717-538-5589.

Philadelphia Mennonite High School (grades 9-12) seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2008-09 school year: ***Full-time science instructor*** (chemistry/physics), ***full-time social studies instructor***. Please send resumé to Barbara Moses, Principal, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130; Fax: 215-769-4063; Email: mos147@comcast.net.

Director of nursing, **Bethel College**, North Newton, Kan. The director provides educational and administrative leadership to the department of nursing. Ph.D. prepared applicants desired, M.S.N. required. See http://www.bethelks.edu/hr/openings/ for complete application details. AA/EOE

Goshen College seeks ***.5 FTE faculty member in psychiatric/mental health nursing*** beginning July 2008. Teach three psych/mental health nursing courses; committee assignments and student advising. M.S. in Nursing required, Ph.D. preferred. To apply, please visit the employment page of www.goshen.edu and follow instructions. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with the Mennonite Church.

Hinkletown Mennonite School, a K-8 Christian school, is seeking a ***full-time administrator/director of development*** position available July 2008. This chief executive position is responsible for the daily operations of the school as well as strategic planning and budgeting. Responsibilities include fund-raising, capital campaign, recruitment and donor relations. Supervision of teachers is provided by a full-time Principal. Excellent communication and relational skills are required. A bachelor's degree in education or administration is preferred. Email resumé to boardchair@hmsk8.org or mail to: Roy Hoover, 668 South Kinzer Ave., New Holland, PA 17557; 717-354-7100.

Coming to **Montreal** for school or vacation? Support a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada project while enjoying Montreal's trendy "Plateau" district by staying at ***Maison de l'amitié Summer Guestrooms and Student residence***. Student housing available for September. 514-843-4356, www.residencema.ca reservations@maisondelamitie.ca.

Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference seeks applicants and nominations for ***lead conference minister*** (LCM). Responsibilities and qualifications are described on the conference Web site: http://im.mennonite.net. Applicants should submit a letter of interest and a completed ministerial leadership information form (available through the Mennonite Church USA Web site: http://www.mennoniteusa.org/MLI/default.asp) to Search Committee, c/o Don Garber, 65975 State Road 15, Goshen, IN 46526. The successful applicant will be ordained or able to be ordained and have pastoral or other leadership experience. Remuneration will be commensurate for the level of responsibility and experience. Candidates from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups and women are encouraged to apply. Send nominations to the above address or complete a nomination form online: www.logiforms.com//formdata/user_forms/18609_3637576/61901/. Applications will be reviewed beginning July 15. The position will remain open until filled. Start date is negotiable, although the goal is for this person to begin by Jan. 1, 2009. Direct questions to Don Garber: 574-533-0121 or donwg@juno.com.

Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA seeks ***part-time regional pastor***. The regional pastor, with a half-time (2.5 days/week) appointment serves congregations in Eastern Ohio and Northwest Pennsylvania. Qualifications: A minimum of 5 years pastoral experience within Mennonite Church USA congregations. Preference will be given to people with a seminary degree or reasonable equivalent. The successful candidate will have strong written and oral communication skills, excellent relational skills, demonstrated leadership, with the ability to articulate conference positions with enthusiasm and passion, and a perceptive listener. Candidates must be committed to Anabaptism as expressed in the 1995 Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. Salary/Benefits: The half-time assignment (2.5 days/week) salary will be based on denominational guidelines with proportional health-care benefits, vacation and sick days. Date available: Aug. 1, 2008. Applications: ministerial leadership information forms should be submitted to Tom Kauffman at tekauffman@bex.net, or sent to P.O. Box 140065, Toledo, OH 43614. Applications accepted until July 15, 2008 or until the position is filled. See full job description at the Ohio Conference Web site: www.ohio.mennonite.net.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Penn View Christian School is seeking two enthusiastic ***full-time middle school (grades 6th-8th) teachers*** beginning in the 2008-09 school year: science, social studies. Penn View offers a Christ-centered, academically excellent education for 615 students in early childhood through eighth grade. Please visit our Web site at www.pennview.org for general information about the school and a professional application. Please send your resumé and completed application to Stephen Schrag, Middle School Principal, Penn View Christian School, 420 Godshall Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 215-723-1196; Emails may be sent to sschrag@pennview.org.

Pastor required for **Good News Mennonite Church**, 2764 Ness Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 1A7; Email: gnmc@mts.net or doerksen.p.t@gmail.com; Phone: 807-548-5169. Competitive salary with benefits.

Houseparent couple (two full-time roles) needed for group home in Lititz (Pa.) area that serves adults who are developmentally disabled. Christian-based program. Separate apartment for staff couple (two bedrooms). Work various shifts, including every other weekend. Regular time off weekly. Excellent benefits package. EOE. Must have Pa., drivers license and ability to do lifting if needed. Experience preferred. A heart to serve people required. Contact Patricia at Friendship Community: 717-656-2466 ext. 162.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION
TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2008 TOURS

CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)
TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)
FOLLOWING the STEPS of MOSES (November 2-14)

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (January 3-13)
CHURCHES AND SAFARIS in KENYA and TANZANIA (February 9-20)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 4-17)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (June 5-19)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-19)
MWC #1 / #3 / #4 / #6 - SOLD OUT
MWC #2 - CHILE, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY (July 5-20) A Few Seats
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and BOLIVIA (July 12-25)
MWC #7 - PARAGUAY and IGUAZU FALLS (July 8-20)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (July 31-August 13)
MENNONITE STORY in POLAND (September 15-23)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (October 24-November 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2010 TOURS

AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 5-25)
WITH OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY:
SPRINGTIME in HOLLAND, BELGIUM & GERMANY (May 6-17)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 1-14)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA & ITS FJORDS (June 13-28)
PENNSYLVANIA to EUROPE (June 19-July 2)
ISRAEL/PALESTINE (June 24-July 5)
SEE WEB SITE FOR MORE TOURS TO OBERAMMERGAU

TOURMAGINATION
DISCOVERY & FELLOWSHIP

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada
Reg. #50014322
2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

Extraordinary every day

Gerald Shenk teaches at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va. His book, *Hope Indeed! Remarkable Stories of Peacemakers,* appears this summer (Good Books).

Among the bravest people I know are families who have deliberately placed themselves in hope's way, choosing to adopt infants or children who are at risk. Some are clearly hardship cases, suffering from trauma or neglect. Some are cross-cultural adoptions; many cross lines of wealth and poverty.

Why do families take on risks and burdens whose immensity they can't fathom? Any time we enter durable commitments, forge new bonds, launch a new human being into life, it seems we tamper with the universe itself. Such unforeseeable consequences await us that it seems almost foolhardy to venture forth.

A friend recently observed that in the social service agency where he works it is conservative Christian families who respond in disproportionate numbers to the challenge of caring for foster children. I wouldn't assume that each such home is perfectly harmonious and ideal. But it is worth pondering how people of this faith profile make themselves more available than others for these tasks.

I haven't participated directly in the dramas of adoption. But I've been close enough to know the delicate dance that occurs as families begin to get acquainted with their potential new son or daughter. What fierce hopes and joys alight in those sacred moments. And what imponderable mysteries await them all.

To welcome a little stranger … is an act of true mercy.

Some stories of adoption are wonderful, miraculous, sheer grace from beginning to end. I believe I know some of the best examples—the goodness of a godly family extended to a tiny, vulnerable being who was very much in need of the care and embrace they offered.

I'm also aware that the stories of adoptions sometimes include tough chapters. For some, the delightful child bears an unknown or uncertain medical history, with conditions that arise from poverty or neglect in prenatal care. And despite the best intentions of medical and other caregivers along the way, infants and older children being placed for adoption sometimes bear the impact of institutional neglect.

I don't want to overstate the difficulties families with adoptive children face. In many ways, the challenges are similar in any family dealing with the particular and unforeseeable consequences of combined genetic and cultural influences on their child.

But I do want to pay tribute to the extraordinary courage and risk-accepting choices that real families have made in opening their homes to take in the vulnerable stranger as one of their own family members. I have known rather closely at least a dozen of these intrepid families, and I honor them for their extraordinary grace and skills.

To welcome a little stranger who brings with her an embodied set of penalties from someone else's substance abuse or neglect is an act of true mercy and astounding patience. To receive one whose congenital medical conditions require decades of intensive care is an act of willing sacrifice, the very kind that New Testament writers describe as discipleship.

To walk with a family undergoing months, even years of delays with the initial paperwork for an international adoption is to share in the lament over bureaucracy, the suspicion of corruption and the high hurdles so many of our immigrant brothers and sisters face in pursuit of citizenship status. And to keep company with these families throughout their journey, as we promise to do for each other in baptisms, weddings and funerals, is to assert that our community has a share in the tremendous investment of energy they are pouring into their hope for a child. Sharing the journeys with adoptive families is also a tangible reminder of the way God brought each of us into God's own family.

Somewhere in the mysteries of the universe lurks this core conviction that the One who made us and brought us into life has patterned a welcome like adoption for us. The Creator intended that the fabric of love should enfold us even though we were strangers to God's purposes. Adoptive families show us a contemporary parable of our inclusion in God's family.

Real families break themselves open to absorb some of the pain of the world. Would-be parents embrace the abandoned ones whose suffering would otherwise go largely unnoticed. Practical peacemakers, agents of shalom, ambassadors of God's love take risks for the healing of the nations, one vulnerable person at a time.

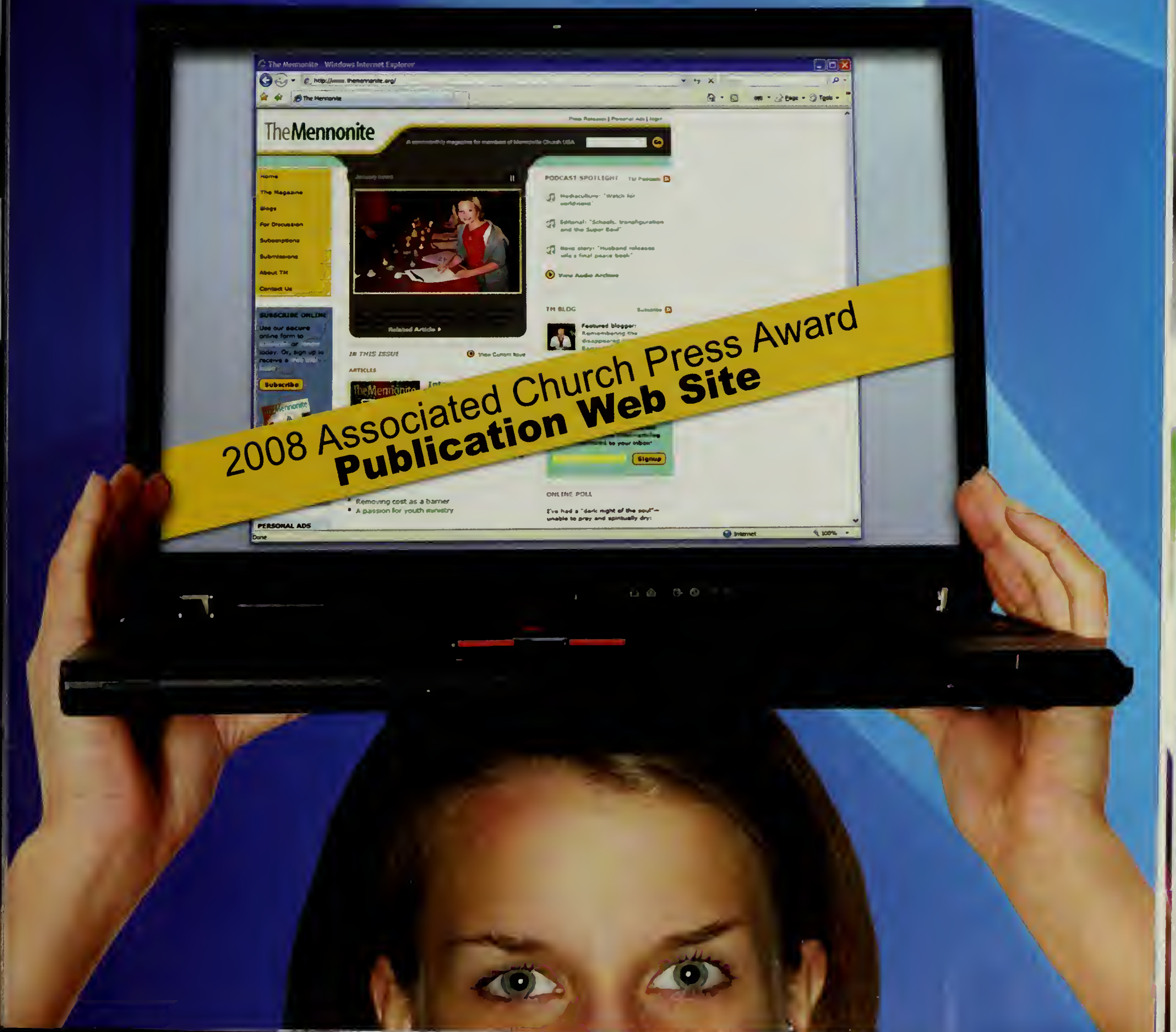
If you know some of these everyday heroes, celebrate! Make music or share a meal together. Read the living parable and remember how God reached out to embrace each of us into a family. TM

Make this your homepage

Make **www.themennonite.org** your homepage and get the latest news, photos, press releases and blog updates right away.

Since we post photos and news releases from all the schools, agencies and conferences, **www.themennonite.org** offers the most comprehensive news coverage available for Mennonite Church USA.

You can also answer poll questions, subscribe to RSS feeds and view videos.


TheMennonite
Home
The Magazine
Blogs
For Discussion
Subscriptions
Submissions
About TM
Contact Us
PODCAST SPOTLIGHT
TM BLOG
IN THIS ISSUE
ARTICLES
ONLINE POLL
PERSONAL ADS
Subscribe
Signup
2008 Associated Church Press Award
Publication Web Site

***************CAR-RT LOT**C-023
62021 885 15-DEC-09 66994 1 1
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

Small summit in Canada

A three-day “people’s summit” in Winnipeg, Manitoba, for U.S. and Canadian Mennonites originally held some promise. Now the purpose of this “crossroads” gathering July 8-10 seems to be in peril. While more than 400 Canadian Mennonites will attend, only 50 U.S. Mennonites are registered. Furthermore, the goal of the gathering is to help build relationships among members of both denominations at the “grass roots.” But many of the U.S. registrants will represent Mennonite Church USA agencies.

Pam Peters-Pries, the Mennonite Church Canada staff person primarily responsible for organizing the gathering, was gracious in her explanations about why so few U.S. Mennonites will attend:

- This is the first time the two denominations have had an event like this that does not have a business meeting with it.
- The low turnout by U.S. Mennonites may relate to its location (Winnipeg) or its timing (summer vacations near July 4) or the mid-week dates.

Peters Pries also cautioned against reading too much into the low U.S. turnout.

“I would not leap very quickly,” she said, “to say that there is a lack of interest from U.S. Mennonites in partnerships with Mennonite Church Canada. If we want to build relationships at a grassroots level, maybe [the low turnout] is a sign that we need to look at other ways.”

We don’t really want to talk about our power as U.S. citizens.

Mennonite Church Canada held its annual conference as part of the joint convention in Charlotte, N.C., in 2005. Perhaps there was an implicit assumption that Mennonite Church USA would reciprocate some time and hold its biennial convention in Canada.

But the two gatherings are very different in size. While several hundred Canadians gathered in Charlotte, it would be a challenge to get 5,000-6,000 U.S. adults and youth to travel to Canada. So the idea for a study conference emerged as a way for the two denominations to maintain contact. A “peoples summit” would be a gathering of all those who want to reinforce relationships with former brothers and sisters in General Conference Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church.

However, it is not to be just a family reunion. The event, entitled, “At the Crossroads: Promise and Peril,” will focus on a very important matter: the assimilation we are experiencing as North American Mennonites.

“Wherein lies the security of the people as they inhabit this land and as they deal with the temptations of wealth, power and ownership?” is one of the questions posed on the registration form.

But less than one-half of 1 percent of Mennonite Church USA will be present to wrestle with such a question. I suspect there are reasons other than those offered by Peters-Pries. Some of these reasons are profound; some are pragmatic:

- We don’t really want to talk about our power as U.S. citizens with our Canadian sisters and brothers.
- The strength of our relationships with Canadian Mennonites has faded; we no longer consider those relationships worth the costs involved.
- In this economic slowdown, many of us are spending less on travel as those costs increase.
- Mennonite Church USA convention-goers are accustomed to a youth convention being part of the biennial assembly; there is no youth convention associated with this gathering.

It’s fair to ask, Would 500 Mennonite Church USA members attend a “study conference” in the United States if that gathering had no decision-making authority (a Delegate Assembly) and no youth convention? Probably not.

Regardless, I expect that the meager response to this invitation will frustrate our Canadian sisters and brothers. It may also inject some pragmatism into the relationship: any hope for regular binational gatherings will not come to fruition. But as Peters-Pries suggests, God may have some new way for us to relate. I will be eager to learn whether that is the case.—*ejt*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

TheMennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

July 22, 2008

election year musings

Page 8

12 Who me, advocate for health care?

16 God's communication style is kenotic

18 For such a time as this

32 'It's all politics'

Are memories also our communion?

Isaac Villegas is pastor of Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship

Alex's eyes glistened. With his hand resting gently on Martin's newborn head, he prayed: "Martin, may God bless you and keep you. May the very face of God shine upon you, and be gracious to you … "

His voice quivered.

"May God's presence embrace you and give you peace."

Now it was clear that his moist eyes weren't the result of seasonal allergies. The corners of Alex's eyes welled up with tears as he took Martin from Stacy and Jen's arms and walked through the pews, introducing this new child to us, his family.

Alex stopped at my pew. I looked down at Martin and couldn't help but smile at such a beautiful gift from God. Then I shifted my gaze to eye-level and met Alex's tearful eyes. My smile trembled and my vision blurred. Not wanting to lose control of my silly emotions, I quickly looked elsewhere. No reason to let my tears get the best of me. Alex walked back to the front and returned Martin to Jen and Stacy.

Martin's consecration taught me that when God shows up at church, we are no longer in control—we are caught up in the Spirit. We pray, "Come, Lord Jesus" with the saints (Revelation 22:20). And when he comes in the gentle caress of the Holy Spirit, we are drawn into the permeating embrace of God's eternal love—which is the body of Christ, broken open for us.

"The wind blows where it chooses … So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit," Jesus says in John 3:8. Setting our sails to the winds of the Spirit isn't always comfortable. To surrender our lives to the unknown is hard work: "You cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going."

Many Anabaptists spoke of Christian discipleship as *Gelassenheit*— "loving surrender" as Melchior Hoffman put it in the early 16th century. The trouble with "yielding" or "surrendering" our selves to God is that the Holy Spirit leads us into awkward intimacy and uncomfortable vulnerability. When God's joy flowed into me with Alex's tears, I looked away. When God moved among the pews with Alex and Martin, I resisted. When my heart wanted to jump out of my body, I closed my eyes and tensed my body. Yet despite my efforts, a piece of me—knocked unconscious by my desire for self-control—managed to awake and reach out through my eyes with tears. For a fleeting moment, we communed in the fellowship of joy shared with fugitive tears.

Gelassenheit, loving surrender, is not merely emotionalism—although that's not a bad step for some of us. *Gelassenheit* names how we surrender our lives to God and open our secured selves to the Holy Spirit who moves us into intimacy and companionship. This is how we give and receive the holy embrace of God, extended to us through Jesus' nailed-open arms, and displayed in our fellowship of vulnerable, divine love.

In worship we open our arms to receive the intimacy of God's communion found when eyes meet—or when we shake hands, or share meals, or speak prayers, or exchange words. The eternal love of the Holy Spirit breathes through these gestures, knitting us together into the body of Christ.

Jen and Stacy, their child Martin and Alex have all moved away. But sometimes, unexpectedly, my mind wanders back to Martin's consecration and the friendships I found. And I wonder: Are memories also our communion? Are these fleeting memories a return of the whirling wind of the Spirit? In our remembering, is God at work re-membering us, stitching together again past fellowships of divine love? TM

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 14, July 22, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412 894 8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

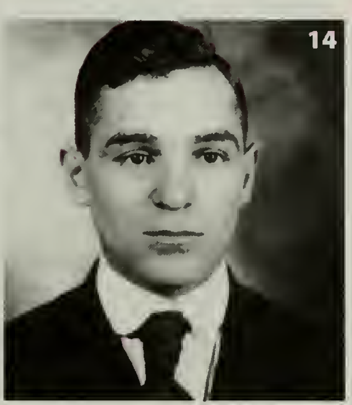
JUL 23 2008
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

6

19

1880 PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION

11



14

16

8 **Election year musings**
Preferring one fox over another—*David A. Shank*

12 **Who me, advocate for health care?**
What to look for in each presidential candidate's proposals for correcting our country's health-care system.—*Glen Miller*

14 **Lost sons: remembering Clayton Kratz**
A good life is spent building bridges—*Judy Clemens*

16 **God's communication style is kenotic**
Philippians 2:6-7a—*Ted Lewis*

19 **Single family housing model questioned**
Fifty-six from U.S. at the "Peoples' Summit" July 8-10 in Winnipeg, Manitoba—*Anna Groff*

20 **Mennonite elected officials describe how they put faith and state together**—*Anna Groff*

22 **Conference lauds denominationalism**
Linda Kalmar

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Grace and truth**
Are memories also our communion?—*Isaac Villegas*

4 **Readers say**

6 **News digest**

18 **Leadership**
For such a time as this—*J. Daryl Byler*

26 **For the record**

30 **Mediaculture**
Radio in the woods—*Anna Groff*

32 **Editorial**
'It's all politics'—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Photo illustration by Dee Birkey

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, The Mennonite, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Into the light

Regarding "Into the Light" and "Will the Tattered Quilt of Loss Ever be Mended?" (June 17): Words cannot express my appreciation to Emma Adams and Margalea Warner for their vulnerability in sharing about the impact of mental illness on their lives. I was moved to the depths of my soul and was once again reminded that I am not alone in my own walk with mental illness. Thank you. —*Crystal Horning, Blacksburg, Va.*

Dear Emma, I am writing to you via *The Mennonite* because your story ("Into the Light," June 17) touched my heart. In my job as a mental-health worker I have walked beside people who have mental health challenges, as you do. Your story is one I have heard often: voices telling you things that lead to dark places and sad consequences. It is hard to know and believe that God is there with you. It has been my privilege to be a reminder of God's light in my work. If I were sitting next to you I would remind you that you are loved not only by friends and family around you, but by Christ who is with you even in the darkest of struggles. I hope and pray that you have people around you who reflect God's love and compassion.

Mental illness is hard to understand—sometimes equally so for those who suffer with it and work with the mentally ill as for those who have never really encountered it.

It is so often true that for each time of walking in the light there are walks in the darkness also. You are correct that people pull away from those with mental illness and those who suffer with them. I join with you in hoping that through your courageous story, instead of pulling away others would draw closer to give support and strength. And to those who have read Emma's story, and this open letter to her, I encourage you to find a way to support people like Emma and her family and friends. A little care and compassion can do so much. Pray, yes. But also let that prayer open you to action. Be God's hands and feet in ministering to all who are in need—regardless of the need. Find a way to bring light to where there is darkness and hope where there is despair.—*Carole Boshart, Eugene, Ore.*

Freedom from shame

Thanks for printing Margalea Warner's article, "Will the Tattered Quilt of Loss Ever Be Mended?" (June 17). I appreciated the way the author brought us into a space where we could grieve along with her the death of one who had so few mourners at his funeral. I also appreciated Warner's courage in describing matter-of-factly some of the ways she is affected by schizophrenia. For too long an illness like schizophrenia has meant a sentence of total isolation from those not directly affected by it, and we who keep it at a distance see it only as a stereotype and something to dread. She helped us see the seriousness of the illness but also to see it as something ordinary—one of the many life-threatening conditions we face as human beings.

Warner described hope for a world where, "No one will be ashamed and no one will hide secrets," where "the mending hands of God will make us whole." Her freedom from shame and the glimpse she offers us of the once-secret world of schizophrenia are signs that God is bringing such a vision of hope into reality.—*Christine Guth, Goshen, Ind.*

"Effervescence" is the wrong word

In reading Ed Diller's, " 'Effervescence' is a Wonderful Word" (Leadership, June 17), I was grateful to read of the clear wisdom of Robert Kreider. Many of us have received his words of insight tempered by a playful and warm regard for those who have gone on before us. However, I am not sure if the words of Robert Kreider are being used appropriately in this context. While a statement can "sing" and exude "effervescence," the recent proposals for restructuring Mennonite Church USA run completely counter to the metaphor.

I have experienced the proposal—as a reader of Mennonite periodicals—as a distant observer. I do not believe the "distance" has to do with my geographical proximity but to the closed nature of the process. While I hear the rumblings from friends who serve the church in various agencies, partici-

IN THIS ISSUE

A presidential election in the United States offers us an opportunity every four years to assess just how much we have been assimilated into U.S. culture. David A. Shank's "Election Year Musings" (page 8) invites us to think about our voting from the perspective of Christians elsewhere around the world. Glen Miller (page 12) suggests some ways to evaluate each presidential candidate's health-care plans. Anna Groff profiles a number of Mennonites who have held, or still hold, elected office at state and local levels (page 20). And in case we wonder whether Mennonites should vote—or worry that political involvement is a sign of cultural assimilation—we publish a letter from Anna Landis Funk (page 11) that begins, "Oh, I tell you, I was so caught up in this election." The election to which she refers was in November 1880.—*Editor* pate in the Constituency Leaders Council or serve as conference ministers, I have yet to hear an open invitation to haggle, barter or debate the merits of the Executive Board's proposal. In fact, much of what I read is quite the opposite of partnering to develop a faithful structure.

In part, this is a crisis of ecclesiology. Are we a church that is willing to behave as it believes? That the Spirit of God is among the people as we actively listen to God's word through Scripture and listen to one another? Or, for bureaucratic expediency, have we relinquished our role as the community of discernment to those on our governance boards?

The Executive Board action comes across as a dictate or a *fait accompli.*

As I read the Executive Board's proposal in its vague verbiage, the metaphor of Robert Kreider is being misused. "Effervescence" is formed by two Latin words that literally mean "to boil out." Merriam-Webster proposes that it should be defined as "to bubble, hiss and foam as gas escapes; to show liveliness or exhilaration." Effervescence, then, is about expansion and not about centralizing boards and decision-making. Centralization tries to put "that wonderful moment when a soda is opened and the aromatic flavor jumps out," back into the bottle.

The Executive Board's proposal sounds more like putting a lid on it than allowing the Holy Spirit and the work of God's people to show "liveliness or exhilaration."—*Craig Morton, Meridian, Idaho*

Disappointed by critique

With disappointment I read the *ad hominem* critique (Readers Say, June 17) of the article written by Mennonite Church USA Moderator Sharon Waltner ("The Season of Planting is Upon Us," May 20). Surely it is possible to register disagreement on issues or proposed policy changes before the wider church without questioning or making assumptions about the motives of our sisters and brothers in Christ.—*Eric Deckert, Freeman, S.D.*

Straying from original intent

Regarding recent articles and letters about Mennonite Church USA's proposed new structure: I was a participant in the "Consultation on Missional Identity" held March 2000 at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va. I believe this was the "kick-off" of the missional or transformational aspects for the future Mennonite Church USA. As I recall, the objective set as a top priority was to decentralize Mennonite Church USA with area conferences to play a major role in missions and outreach—meaning that there would be less "top down" organization.

We seem to be moving away from this goal by placing all of the authority for Mennonite Church USA in one Executive Board, thereby dismissing the work of the individual boards of Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Education Agency and Mennonite Mutual Aid.

I fear that we have strayed too far from the original intent of the consultation I attended eight years ago. I know that we were given a "blueprint" for this transformation, but the current proposal appears to be completely different from the direction proposed in 2000. I wonder why we had a consultation if it is not going to be followed more closely.—*Karla C. Morton, Meridian, Idaho*

Prophetic role of pastors

The silence on the part of Mennonite Church USA and *The Mennonite* around the irrational and, to a large extent, racially-biased response to Rev. Jeremiah Wright has been perplexing, disheartening and confusing. Ron Adams broke that silence in the June 17 issue ("When Pastors are Prophets") with well chosen words of insight.

We continue to languish in a culture that has blurred the boundaries between church and state. Therefore, we have difficulty understanding, as Adams points out, the prophetic role of pastors. Not only does the media have difficulty understanding the role of pastors, but society in general suffers from this confusion. Pastors, as well as

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Compared to the presidential election four years ago: (60 votes)

○ I am more interested in this year's election (80 %)

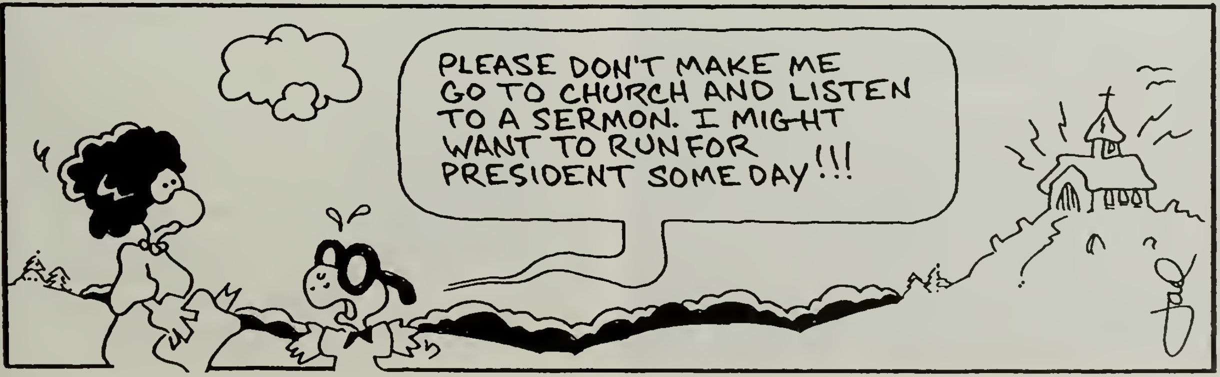
○ Less interested (10 %)

○ Not sure (10 %)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Readers Say continues on page 31.

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME GO TO CHURCH AND LISTEN TO A SERMON. I MIGHT WANT TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT SOME DAY!!!

IN BRIEF

Peddling across USA without limbs

Bob Mortimer is an ordained minister (Assembly of God) and motivational speaker from Gig Harbor, Wash. He has lost three limbs due to an accident but is currently hand-wheeling a bike from Gig Harbor to the Statue of Liberty in New York. His purpose is to meet people along the way, talk in churches and other venues, and inspire hope and courage. Former Goshen (Ind.) College president Vic Stoltzfus was Mortimer's pastor when he lived in Ohio 40 years ago and Mortimer attended the North Lima Mennonite Church as a boy. Progress reports on the ride are available at www.hcjourney.org.

Card campaign

A group of four Mennonites in Winnipeg, Man., sent a letter and reply postcard to every Mennonite Church Canada congregation last month, asking for support in its desire to change the church's position that homosexual activity is sinful. The mailing, in addition to raising this emotionally heated issue, also elicited strong responses as the letter suggested that the group was presenting the postcards at the (July 7-10) national church gatherings. *—Canadian Mennonite*

Little change expected in Zimbabwe

TORONTO, Ontario—"It is God's grace that sustains us," said Bishop Danisa Ndlovu from his hotel room the morning after Zimbabwe's June 27 election. From Bulawayo, Ndlovu who is vice-president and president-elect of Mennonite World Conference, was in Toronto to speak at the Brethren in Christ (BIC) General Conference (North America).

Two days after the election, discredited by much of the world, Robert Mugabe was sworn in as president of Zimbabwe in time for him to attend the African Union summit in Egypt as the nation's newly elected head of state. His election was announced within hours of the polls closing in contrast to the March 29 election when citizens waited for more than a month for vote results. Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, had withdrawn from the ballot, condemning the run-off election as a farce.

The March election was called free but not fair; the run-off election in June was said to be neither, with beatings and harassment happening within sight of African and international observers, noted Ndlovu. Rural areas were particularly vulnerable. He did not know if BIC people were among victims. He knew that his own family in Bulawayo was fine, although he was unable to communicate directly the morning after the election since phones were not working.

While Ndlovu hopes the aggression and harassment of opposition party supporters will go down, he does not expect much change in the country without regional and international pressure on the president.*—Mennonite World Conference*

Gregg Dick

Bethel golfers volunteer their skills

For the second year in a row, Bethel College golf team members instructed at Kids Across America, a camp in southern Missouri. Team member Jordan Esau (above) corrects one camper's form. KAA is a Christian sports camp for inner-city children and youth; around 6,300 come to the organization's facilities each summer from nearly 500 cities across the United States. Bethel College is in North Newton, Kan.*—Bethel College*

MCC concludes tsunami aid

AKRON, Pa.—In the village of Ulee Tuy, Indonesia, 150 families who lost their homes in the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami are celebrating the completion of their new houses that Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) helped build as a final project in its tsunami response. The families prepared a feast, performed dances and hosted government officials during a hand-over ceremony in Ulee Tuy on June 24.

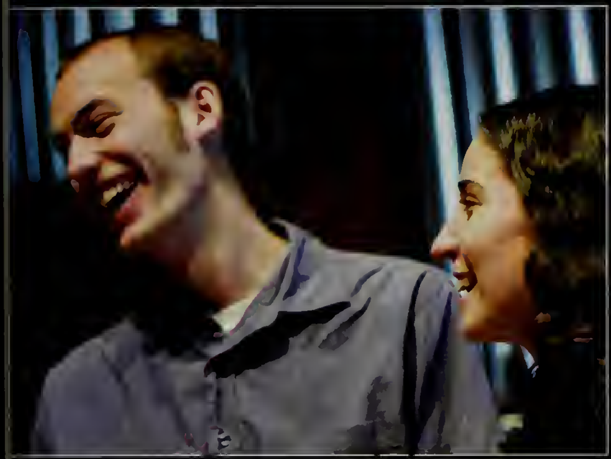
"It was really a very special time," said Jeff Yoder, an MCC tsunami response coordinator. "People were excited about seeing the housing."

In early July, MCC closed its office in Indonesia's Aceh province after providing nearly $10 million in relief and recovery assistance in Aceh following the tsunami. MCC's tsunami response programs in India and Sri Lanka are also nearing completion. While MCC continues to work in other parts of Indonesia, Jeff Yoder and his wife Laura Yoder, who taught university social science courses, are finishing their MCC assignments in Aceh.

The tsunami left hundreds of thousands of people without homes. More than half of MCC's funds in Aceh went to reconstruction projects, including 623 houses, 22 small bridges, one junior high school and numerous drainage canals and levees. In addition, MCC supported a wide variety of projects in relief, public health, education, job creation, trauma healing and peace-building.*—MCC*

Hesston church sends $5,500 to China

HESSTON, Kan.—When Dave Osborne, international student director at Hesston College, planned a two-week recruiting trip to the People's Republic of China, he didn't anticipate having the opportunity to help Christians in that country provide relief to earthquake survivors. One of the people on-location who helps to coordinate with the Chinese church in Sichuan province is James Stabler-Havener, who serves as educational services coordinator for Mennonite Partners in China. Osborne contacted Stabler-Havener via email

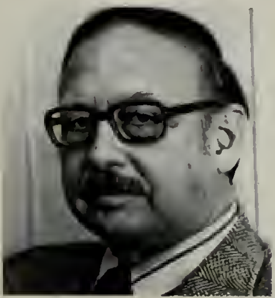

Matt Styer

ɅU student drowns

e Eastern Mennonite University community, Harrisonburg,
., gathered on July 2 to mourn the death by drowning of
ent graduate Matthew R. Garber (above left) in Costa Rica
July 1. Garber, 22, of Elizabethtown, Pa., was swimming
th a group of young people in a cove that was not known to
dangerous. A riptide apparently caught several of the
immers; all but Garber managed to return safely to shore.
rber had graduated with honors from EMU on April 27 with
achelor of science degree in nursing and a minor in Bible
d religion. He was spending the summer in Costa Rica
isting a missionary family and learning Spanish. Pictured
ove with classmate Shannon (Yoder) Roth, Garber was also
ive in EMU's Ministry Inquiry Program, having completed a
mmer internship at Plains Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

June 5 and inquired about a church-to-church response between Hesston Mennonite Church, where he and his wife Sena are members, and a church in Sichuan province. Stabler-Havener responded that "a church-to-church gift would be most welcome." So Osborne met with the pastor of a Protestant church in Sichuan Province on July 8 and gave the church $5,500 from Hesston Mennonite Church.—*Hesston College*

Goshen prof Al Albrecht taught AFL-CIO



GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College professor emeritus of communication Al Albrecht, 84, passed away on June 23 in the hospital after a lengthy illness. He taught at the college from 1964 to 1987. Albrecht was a graduate of Goshen College in 1950, received a master's degree at Purdue University in 1958 and a doctorate degree at Indiana University in 1965. Prior to teaching at Goshen, he taught for four years at Indiana University and three years at the University of Vermont. In his role at Goshen as professor of communication, he directed forensics, chaired the department and was executive secretary for the Intercollegiate Peace Speech Association. He taught speech and parliamentary procedure in AFL-CIO leadership training institutes, United Steel Workers institutes and local unions. He was a member of the National Speech Communications Association, the Central States Speech Association and the Indiana State Speech Association.—*Goshen College*

EMU prof Al Keim grew up in Amish home

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Albert N. (Al) Keim, 71, professor emeritus of history at Eastern Mennonite University, died June 27 at the University of Virginia Medical Center. He had a successful liver transplant in 2007, but his health had declined in recent months. Keim joined the EMU history department faculty in 1965 and retired in 2000. He was appointed vice president for academic affairs-dean at EMU July 1, 1977, and served in that role seven years. The Hartville, Ohio, native grew up in an Amish home and attended Amish parochial schools. He received a B.A. degree from EMU in 1963, an M.A. from the University of Virginia in 1965 and a Ph.D. from Ohio State University in 1971. His doctoral work focused on the late John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State during the Eisenhower administration, and Dulles' ties with the Federal Council of Churches, an ecumenical organization that sought to influence American foreign policy.—*EMU*

Two retirement communities to merge

LANSDALE, Pa.—Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Homes and Dock Woods Community of Lansdale and Hatfield, Pa., will soon share a common parent company and board of directors. In June, the two Mennonite retirement communities in southeastern Pennsylvania announced plans to formally affiliate in order to strengthen each respective community and extend care further into the region. Combined, the two communities employ 600 employees serving more than 1,150 senior residents, as well as up to 100 families in Dock Woods' affordable housing for families. Both communities are sponsored by Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Conference. Since the early 1970s, they have periodically explored the possibility of joining.
—Russell L. Mast

—compiled by Everett Thomas

IN BRIEF

Kruger honored

Helen Kruger of Saskatoon, Sask., is the recipient of the 2008 Alumni Ministry and Service Award given each year by the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. The announcement was made at the dean's breakfast, May 23. Kruger was the first woman to serve on the board of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, beginning in 1974 and serving for 12 years. After receiving the M.Div., she became one of only 16 women who were certified teaching supervisors in CAPPE, the Canadian association of chaplains.—*AMBS*

French woman too submissive

France denied citizenship to a veiled Moroccan woman on the grounds that her "radical" practice of Islam is incompatible with basic French values such as equality of the sexes. It was the first time a Muslim applicant has been rejected for reasons to do with religious practice.

"She has adopted a radical practice of her religion, incompatible with essential values of the French community, particularly the principle of equality of the sexes," said a ruling by the Council of State on July 11.—*Le Monde*

US PRESIDENTIAL
2008
ELECTION

Dreamstime.com

Jesus said to them, "Go and tell that fox Herod, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work.'"
—Luke 13:32 (paraphrase)

Election year musings:
preferring one fox over another

David A. Shank

During this national, presidential election year, the United States is more-and-more spoken of as "empire" despite its having only 5 percent of the world's population. And that is where I now live amidst all of the politicking hubbub.

This brings to mind a member of our congregation in Belgium who, on a similar occasion back in the 1960s, complained that nothing would influence his life more than the results of an upcoming U.S. election—yet he had absolutely no voice in it whatsoever. He was a buying agent for a copper mining company in the Congo's Katanga, and he was not mistaken. His job did later disappear under U.S. Cold War policies.

In the late 1970s, a friend in Scotland voiced a similar complaint, reflecting on the then-dominant U.S. power in NATO.

A West African Harrist friend spoke in similar terms in the 1980s; he was Côte d'Ivoire's minister of petroleum.

The ends-of-the-earth impact of U.S. presidential elections in the third millennium after Jesus the Messiah is both startling and sobering, somewhat like the tail wagging the dog.

In the face of U.S. world power today, there is a real sense in which my overseas Christian friends find themselves along with many multitudes of others in a political situation not unlike Jewish and Christian believers during the times of the Old and New Testaments—or of 16th-century Europe when Anabaptists and Mennonites emerged. Politically speaking, all of these were "subjects." Such believers were "subject to" the pharaohs of Egypt, the kings of Israel and Babylon, and the emperors of Greece, Rome or the so-called Holy Roman Empire. Whatever legal rights that were exercised by such "subjects" were defined by the dominant royal or imperial authority and its powers—on which they had no legal grasp or influence whatsoever. The rights granted them were seen to be benevolences accorded by a higher human authority with its power. Under such conditions, when the church taught civics as in the Bible, it taught largely: "Be subject to the authorities, except for requirements which counter your obedience to Christ."

Today, by contrast, for U.S. "citizens," the civic situation of the disciple of Jesus with a voice for the Kingdom of God is extremely different. Indeed, in the United States it might seem that our church has not always caught up with this profound distinction between "subject" and "citizen," and it has often left the teaching of citizenship up to the public schools.

I had to think that through all over again in the early 1960s when fellow disciples in the former colony of the Belgian Congo suddenly found themselves to be not just subjects, but more radically, citizens in an independent Democratic Republic of the Congo. For the first time, they exercised their civic opportunities with a new awareness and began addressing one another as "Citoyen or Citoyenne So-and-So." They were no longer "subjects" of Belgian colonial authority but "citizens" of a republic with all of their rights and privileges. I had grown up in the United States with the latter accepted as a normal reality but had largely ignored how exceptional and revolutionary such citizenship is.

When, for example, one is born in the United States, one is recognized by the national law to possess freedom and rights that are said to originate from a universal Creator/creature relationship—and not at all from the benevolence of some human authority and power. Such universal freedom and rights from the Creator elicit, authorize and commend personal responsibility for the general well-being of the earth and the whole world. But, secondarily, they do not in any way eliminate one's being "subject to" authorities and laws. One still remains a "subject" in a nation of rules and the powers that be.

In contradiction to those historical times of Scripture and the early Mennonites, I am not just a "subject." I am also a "citizen" by the grace of God. As a descendant of nonresistant, Swiss, Anabaptist immigrants of 1717, my current freedom and rights as a "citizen" authorize me to participate in the choice of those fallible people to whom I will be subject—whether they be mayor, governor or president. Just as revolutionary, my God-given freedom and rights also authorize me to participate in the choice of whatever fallible people will represent me in making the very laws to which I will be subject. Further, as a disciple of Jesus and a voice for the Kingdom of God, I am free to have conversation with such representatives and give them my personal counsel whenever I so wish.

My God-given freedom and rights authorize me to participate in the choice of whatever fallible people will represent me in making the very laws to which I will be subject.

I do have personal, Spirit-informed preferences among the various choices that are offered, whether of those to whom I am called to be subject or of those who will help make the laws to which I will be subject. With Jesus, I recognize that any of them—like Herod—may well be a "fox." I honestly recognize that I cannot fully affirm any fallible candidate nor predict the ultimate consequences of any one's leadership. Yet I tend to prefer one "fox" over another. And I can state that preference by freely giving my voice, even anonymously, if I so wish.

My personal participation in the election process—by which I make known my preference even among limited, "fox"-like options—is my act of "citizenship" recognized as given to me here by my Creator by virtue of my birth. Whatever other meaning it might have, it is a "political" act. My participation as a Christian disciple with a voice for the Kingdom of God is an influence upon the *polis*.

The *polis* is the ordering of the inhabitants of region, city, state or nation—and today—the world. Obviously, such influence may be oh-so slight. Yet it helps to determine to whom and to what all of us here—citizens and foreigners—are bound to be "subject to" with its unbelievable worldwide impact.

So, when I vote, I remember my Belgian, Scottish and Ivorian Christian friends. Too many times was I asked whether there wasn't something I could do "back there." Such friends have no voice whatsoever in the face of the current, unique and far-reaching "imperial" dominance in power and wealth of the United States, to which they are nevertheless subject. Without any voice whatsoever, they too will be significantly influenced and pressured by the U.S. political, economic and cultural weight to which they are subject in the world today.

If I were to decide to not exercise my freedom to give my voice, that would nevertheless still be a political act. In fact, it could be seen to reflect an unconcern about the value for others—at home and abroad—of my preferences as a member of the church and a committed disciple of Christ with a voice for the Kingdom of God.

But how, amidst all of the conflicting interests within the current hubbub, does one determine such preferences?

If I were to decide to [not vote], ... it could be seen to reflect an unconcern about the value for others.

I know from the Gospel of Messiah that God's ultimate purpose worldwide is "the reconciliation of all things." As a disciple already reconciled, I am oriented to God's will for peace. Here, in the richest and most powerful United States of America, I do express my electoral preferences. But I do not decide my preference on the basis of my personal interests by asking what will be best for me, or for my condition, or for my state and my country.

Rather, with reference to my recognized, God-given rights and freedom in view of the general well-being of all the earth, I seriously consider the different possibilities. Then, with my overseas friends, and for their sake, I ask rather: Which "fox" will best provide the leadership that will best contribute to the general welfare of the whole world? Whose leadership do I think will most reduce worldwide the destructiveness of injustice? Who will move the nations of the world generally toward peace? Who will support the freedoms that allow the reconciling Word of Jesus Christ to flourish through communities of his disciples planted among all the nations?

Of course, I know that my interpretation of my vote will not be given it by others, but I am still free to give it my own interpretation. Yet, is not that elected, fallible magistrate committed beforehand to exercise the use of violence through armed police and military power? Further, if he is a professing Christian, is that not already a highly-significant "foxy" compromise—much like that of Roman emperors who professed the faith? Is it not a serious contradiction for me to vote for one whom I know to be so committed ahead of time?

In this country it is the national Constitution—made by another generation, prior to and quite independently of me and my birth and my voice—that so commits the magistrate. My voice for the Kingdom of God—as a U.S. citizen—does not determine that function nor explicitly approve how it will be exercised. It only participates in the determination of a fallible person who will hold that office. As a Spirit-led disciple of Christ, I voice my preference.

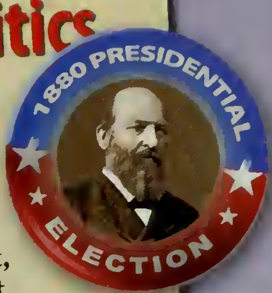
But, what about co-disciples who differ with my preference and cancel it out?

With them I may well share both my basic perspective and my insights and continue to assume full responsibility for my own voice. Yet, I must add that I have no illusions about the immediate, direct effectiveness of this exercise of citizenship, done in hope. Still, I rejoice in my civic situation and its freedom and take very seriously its invitation to state my preferences. The *polis* wants to know them. (In Belgium, one is even fined if one does not vote!)

In the end, my vote is one among hundreds of other problematical situations in the world where I trust that my decisions and actions, oriented and interpreted through hope in the coming Kingdom of God, will help nudge things forward in the fulfillment of God's purposes, until they are fully fulfilled in Christ. I pray, "Your kingdom come on earth, as it is in heaven."

David A. Shank, of Goshen, Ind., answers difficult questions for Third Way Café. He and his wife Wilma are retired from overseas ministries in Belgium and West Africa under the former Mennonite Board of Missions, that sent them to live and study in Scotland for more than two years. During the 1970s, between overseas ministries, David was associate professor of religion and campus minister at Goshen (Ind.) College and was speaker for "The Mennonite Hour."

Anna Landis Funk and attitudes towards politics



Elkhart, Indiana, November 10, 1880

Dear brother and family...

Oh, I tell you, I was so caught up in this election. My whole family was, I guess. My husband, Abraham (they call him A.K. down at the publishing house) has campaigned for the Republicans since the 1860 presidential campaign! His brother, John (yes, the famous John F. Funk), was campaigning back then, too, for the Republican's "Wide Awake" club. But ever since he was ordained in '65, he hasn't voted. Our Mennonite ministers aren't supposed to vote.

Here in Indiana and the rest of the Midwest, the Mennonite people are real hesitant about voting. Much more so than back in Pennsylvania where the Funks and Landises came from.

The conservatives argue that we are to be separate from the world, and "what can be more worldly than politics?" "True followers of Christ confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, for they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one." "The way of governments is not the way for Christians." They say that to elect someone else to use the oath and wield the sword is just as bad as using them ourselves.

So, over in Ohio, the "old" Mennonites are only allowed to vote for the road supervisor, the director of the poor, the school director and the postmaster. And they don't want their members "mingling in politics." Heavens, they think the parades and debates and barbeques are pure hoopla, "an idolatrous Babel business."

Well, I disagree. I quite enjoy seeing the community come together at the picnics and marches. It's exciting and a good cause, too. I agree that Christians shouldn't participate in war or violence, but why can't we use the vote to spread peace principles?

We Mennonites are simply not as separate from our world as some like to think we are. We are citizens of our communities—many of us leaders, and we take advantage of much that our communities offer. We can't just refuse to help set the direction of our towns and counties and nation!

Besides, if we believe that God instituted government for the good of people, and we live in a democracy where we are the government, isn't it our duty to help our government do the things God instituted it to do? We Christians can do a lot, through the government as well as outside it, to improve the condition of our fellowman, to promote Christian order and justice and the reign of peace. Goodness, with all the drunkenness in our land, we certainly can vote to promote more Christian behavior.

I'm sure some Mennonites and Amish have voted since colonial times. But we've never been very vocal about it, maybe because the church frowned on it. But things have been changing lately. There have been more issues that matter to us—slavery, war, prohibition, the tremendous needs of our cities.

And we Mennonites are changing, too. We're more in touch with people outside our own church group. And the Mennonites who have been arriving from Russia in the last few years have always elected their own governments. Most of them see voting here in the United States as a way to witness and be the "salt of the earth." "Good voters make for good government," they say. So nowadays, the leaders are a little more reluctant to tell us that we shouldn't vote at all! Of course, they still don't all agree.

Why, just a few years ago, a minister from Franconia wrote to my brother-in-law John F. and said that his people liked the *Herald of Truth* but they didn't want to see any articles against voting! In Virginia, they said they preferred that members not be involved in politics, "but if they desire to vote let them do so peaceably and quietly."

But here in Indiana, we had one leader advising us to "stand aloof" from politics and by no means to take on party names. So to find a careful path through all these views, my brother-in-law has been suggesting that Mennonites should either not vote at all or vote without party divisions.

He has to say that now that he's a church leader. But back in the 50s, he used to denounce Democrats for the "accursed demon of slavery." His father Jacob Sr., my father-in-law, used to call them the "traitors" of Bucks County!

I don't know of many Mennonites who aren't Republican, especially back in Pennsylvania. Why? For me, the Republican policies seem best for our economic future, and they were against slavery, like us, when many of us began to vote.

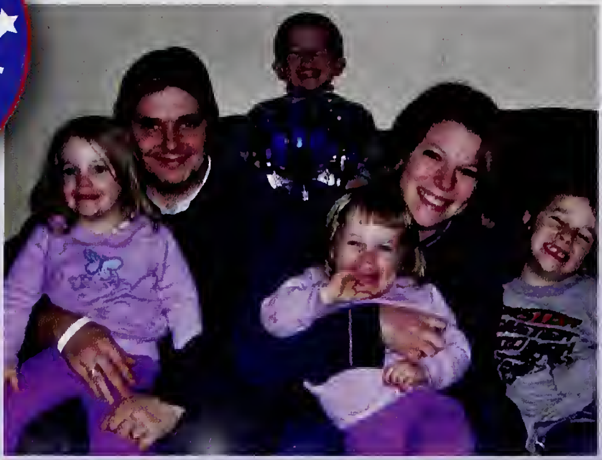
But around here, there must be more Mennonites who vote Democratic. When our Indiana conference was discouraging us from voting, they gave all the theological arguments, then said, "besides, Mennonites are so politically divided that their votes merely cancel each other!"

Oh my, look at the time. I must get back to my letter to brother, but first I had better finish supper. I'm making bean soup tonight, one of my little daughter Maudie's favorite dishes... (exit)

This 1997 compilation written by Janeen Bertsche Johnson was taken from two letters by Anna Landis Funk.

Who me, advocate for health care?

by Glen Miller



Fecho family (left to right): Lara, Rob, Nathan, Rachel and Maya, Isaiah

Photo provided

Rachel Fecho understands how it feels to be without health insurance.

She is a busy mother of four children under 7 years old, including 2½-year-old twins. When I met the Fechos in October 2006, Rob's job offered group health insurance at the individual's expense. With Rob's salary of $9.50 an hour, the insurance premiums would have left little money for food and electric bills. Because of the low salary, their children were eligible to receive care from Medicaid. However, Rob's salary was too high for the adults to qualify for Medicaid, and Rob and Rachel went without insurance.

Fortunately their health was good—except for Rachel's bouts of depression. In order to save money, she looked for cheap medicine for herself through the Internet but was fearful about taking medicines from this source. There was also the nagging fear of an expensive illness or injury, a fear shared by her parents.

Eighteen months later, Rob had a job that provides health benefits at lower cost to them. At Rob's current salary level ($23,000 per year), the children continue to qualify for Medicaid. Rob and Rachel are covered through the employer's insurance.

Rachel is well aware that their story is not unique. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality says more than 60 million people will be without health insurance for some portion of any 12-month period. Studies show that 78 percent of these families have at least one person with a regular job. The number of businesses that supply employee health benefits has decreased from 69 to 60 percent during the five-year period, 2000-2005. In the same period, insurance costs went up 59 percent while salaries increased only 12 percent. More than 50 percent of personal bankruptcies are due to medical bills.

In spite of the highest per capita health care costs in the world, we are getting inferior results. A recent World Health Organization report ranks the United States 47th in life expectancy and 23rd in infant mortality. Eighteen thousand people die unnecessarily each year due to lack of health care.

Despite the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the public concern over the economy and immigration, anxiety over health care remains high. The presumptive presidential nominees, Senators McCain and Obama, agree that health care in this country is failing and in need of major changes. They have outlined their approach to bring relief to families suffering from lack of health care. As individual citizens, we need to become aware of what is being proposed so that our vote will be informed. What do I look for in the proposals?

1) Is there a commitment to providing health care for all? Does the plan provide for basic, affordable health care to all without any refusal due to poor health or financial ability to pay?

With health care for all, no longer will people be refused health care because they don't have insurance. No longer will people be excluded from health care because they have preexisting health issues. No longer will people delay needed health care because they don't have insurance. Mothers will not be faced with making a choice between food and medicine for their children. Families will not have the added financial stress of caring for mental illness of a family member. People of color will not need to worry about inferior care, as is now the case.

Such a plan will share the cost of catastrophic health problems with those who seldom need health care but need insurance for those rare times when illness or injury occurs. The costs for all are shared by all. This system would assure health care for the poor and equal access for people of color.

2) Is there a commitment to preventive care, public health and wellness promotion? Education is a key to reducing the risk of disease and chronic diseases, such as obesity and diabetes. A healthy environment is essential to improve the health of individuals, such as efforts to control pollution and provide hiking trails. Self-responsibility to make healthy choices will require education and incentives. Think what it would mean if half of the pres-

More than 50 percent of personal bankruptcies are due to medical bills.

What to look for in each presidential candidate's proposals for correcting our country's health-care system.

ent advertising for medicines (now $4 billion a year) were given over to the promotion of good health habits. Perhaps we could adopt a different motto than "Ask your doctor if this is right for you."

3) Is there a plan to simplify the health care system and reduce cost of services? Anyone who has had an extensive illness knows the stack of bills that arrive from all sources. Does the proposed plan simplify the system of billing? By simplifying the system, we will lower cost of administration. Currently, the cost of health care administration is over 25 percent. Medicare, essentially a single payer system has administrative costs of 4.6 percent.

When I was hospitalized several years ago, three different staff members asked me the exact same questions about my medical and family history. The last interview was at 2 a.m. There was no way to share the same information. Readily available medical information would streamline care and reduce costs.

4) Does the plan combine private and government services in ways that utilize the strengths of each to provide quality health care for all at a reasonable cost? Solutions to the health-care crisis will require the best efforts of both government agencies and private companies.

In considering the best way forward, we need to keep uppermost in our minds that the goal is to provide quality, affordable care to all. That approach will keep the necessary focus as there is jockeying for position and advantage among government and private concerns.

In 2006-07, I served as the manager of the Healthcare Access Initiative of Mennonite Church USA. In that capacity I heard the stories of the problems of access, cost and quality of health care. These experiences are widespread. Many experts now see the need for a major overhaul of the system of health care. New sparkplugs or a new set of tires won't do.

There is a growing interest in a single-payer system. Anyone who was hospitalized knows the stack of bills from the hospital, laboratory, surgeon, anesthesiologist, physical therapy—and the list goes on. A single-payer system, such as Medicare, would eliminate the many bills. All bills would be submitted to a central agency that pays the bills. This system could be organized on a national, regional or statewide basis.

The single-payer system has been endorsed by professional doctor groups, the Council of Mayors and many labor unions. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA, in endorsing this concept, said that single-payer universal national health insurance is "the program that best responds to the moral imperative of the gospel."

Is it possible to establish health care for all? In 2007, a *New York Times* survey showed that 54 percent of Americans feel health care is in need of major reform. Sixty percent said they would be willing to pay higher taxes to fund a system of health care for all. Taking note of the 95 percent approval of Medicare among seniors, 18 cosponsors introduced a bill in Congress (See HR676.org) entitled, "Medicare for All Act." It would extend Medicare-like benefits to everyone. A grassroots movement of support will be essential to its passage.

Another example: Taiwan recently established a program of health care for all. A blue ribbon panel of medical experts surveyed seven national health-care programs. Ironically the Taiwanese program most closely resembles Medicare.

See http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/oct/07/taiwangetshealthy.

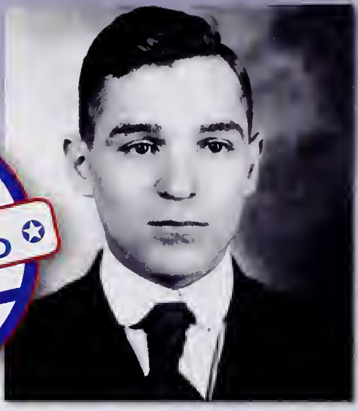
How can we be better informed? Delegates at the San José 2007 convention received a copy of a small booklet, *Healthcare Access: Public Policy Advocacy Guide*. The committee that prepared this booklet suggested three uses for the booklet: as a means to talk to other church members and to our neighbors about concern for the problems of health-care access, as effective ways to speak to government consistent with Anabaptist theology, as a yardstick to measure proposed solutions to the health-care crisis. I recommend reading this booklet available free from Mennonite Church USA offices or online at MennoSource: http://os.mennoniteusa.org/

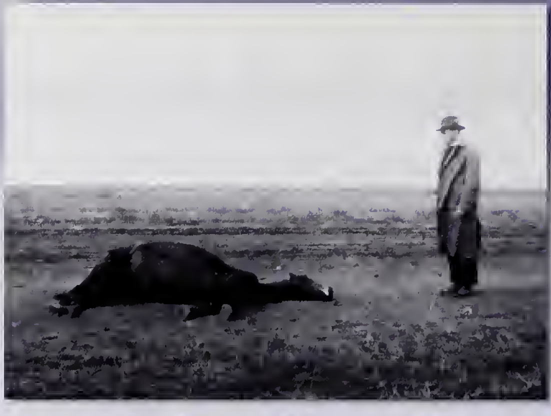
To know the Fecho family is to covet for them the same kind of health care I enjoy under Medicare. To know Rachel is to realize there are millions of Rachels—mothers who only want their child to have a chance in life. Basic health care is a necessary part in making that possible. We all have a part in providing health care for all. We can all become a part of a society that cares for the least among us to provide health care for all.

We need to become aware of what is being proposed so our vote will be informed.

Glen Miller, a retired physician, directed the Mennonite Church USA Healthcare Access Initiative in 2006-2007.

I BELIEVE IN A NEW WORLD





Above: Clayton Kratz, near Alexandrovsk, Russia, in 1920, stands by one of the 12,000 fallen horses that died because of lack of feed. Kratz, Mennonite Central Committee's representative in Russia, later disappeared and was never seen again. Both photos are from MCC's Clayton Kratz Collection, Mennonite Church USA Archives-Goshen, Ind.

Lost sons: remembering Clayton Kratz

By Judy Clemens

A good life is spent building bridges.

Growing up as a Mennonite and a pacifist, I knew few—if any—military people. I spent my formative years in Mennonite communities—except for elementary school where I was the weird kid who "didn't believe in war," kept quiet during the Pledge of Allegiance and never sang the national anthem.

Fast-forward about 30 years to 2005, when Marilyn Borgman contacted me to say her book club was reading my first mystery novel, *Till the Cows Come Home*. She invited me to join the group for the evening. I did, making the six-hour trip to Fox Lake, Ill., where she and her husband, Jim, welcomed me into their home.

We immediately formed a friendship built on mutual respect, love for our families and the desire to do God's will. The funny thing is, Jim Borgman is not "just" Jim Borgman. He is also Senior Chief Petty Officer Jimmie J. Borgman, United States Naval Reserve (retired).

Through our continuing friendship—and the Borgmans sharing the details of their military life, including a tour of Naval Station Great Lakes—I came to have a deeper understanding of those who give their lives in service to our country.

Another man who gave his life in service—who might be familiar to a handful of Mennonites—is Clayton H. Kratz. Having completed his junior year at Goshen (Ind.) College in 1920, Clayton was called by the Mennonite Church to go to Russia as one of the first volunteers for Mennonite Central Committee.

Russian Mennonites were suffering greatly from circumstances caused by that country's civil war; they needed someone to help them before they all starved or froze in the harsh climate.

Kratz, when asked, "Can we depend on you?" said yes.

About a month after arriving in Russia, where he delivered clothes, food and other rations to his Mennonite brothers and sisters, Kratz was arrested as a spy by the Russians and taken away, never to return. No answer was ever found as to what happened to him, but speculations abounded: he'd been shot, he'd died of disease in a prison camp or any number of possibilities.

As a Goshen College student back in the 1990s, I heard Kratz's story, but hadn't thought much further about it until my father-in-law, John R. Smucker, reminded me of it several years ago. Since that time I've felt a strong call to re-introduce this story to the Mennonite Church.

With my other writing I have also been involved in the secular fiction market and saw that, besides being a reminder to church members, a book about Kratz could also be a good way to teach non-Mennonites—who might pick up a novel more easily than a textbook—about our church's beliefs.

The idea for the book simmered on my brain's back burner for almost two years before I began the actual writing. During those two years, I spent downtime in-between my mystery novels to do the research: visiting the Mennonite Church USA Archives in Goshen, Ind,; studying the two videos made about Clayton Kratz; poring over the relevant Goshen College yearbooks; gleaning information from *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* and reading Geraldine Gross Harder's book about Kratz's life, *When Apples Are Ripe*. But besides the Mennonite research, I had other, less familiar areas to

explore. In order to make the book accessible to those outside our faith, I decided to make the protagonist, Stan, a non-Mennonite.

Stan is, in fact, a police detective with a son in the Navy and a wife who has a strong bias against Mennonites as a whole. Throughout the book, Stan gets to know the Mennonites and begins to understand and appreciate them as he learns about their way of life. In turn, the Mennonites he comes into contact with learn about his world view, which is very different from their own.

While writing the book, my friend Chief Borgman answered a multitude of questions pertaining to the military, drawing mostly from his own vast experience. Adjutant Joseph Brown of the Goshen Police Department helped to flesh out my protagonist, offering hours of time in tours, phone calls and e-mails.

I learned more about those two rather foreign career paths in a matter of months than I'd ever imagined possible. It's amazing what people in different walks of life can accomplish when they work together.

Clayton Kratz's family has never been able to completely come to terms with the loss of a much beloved brother and son. His immediate family is no longer living, of course, but nieces, nephews and their children still feel the pain. I am fortunate to be friends with one of Clayton's great-nieces and her husband, and they were kind enough to answer some questions and read my manuscript to make sure it represented their family history in a way acceptable to them.

When I first approached them about working with Clayton's story, they were concerned that I was going to turn it into a commercial mystery, and weren't at all sure they wanted that. I didn't want that either. The result of my work came out to be something pleasing to them, that spoke to the heart of what Clayton was about, and I was happy for that.

In these times of war, I can't help but think about the many families who are burdened with this kind of sorrow, whether the loss comes through work for the church, as on a Christian Peacemaker Team, or work for the military. *Lost Sons* is my attempt at a step toward reconciliation with our own church's past as well as with those around us who might react differently in times of national crisis.

As I said before, I grew up as a pacifist and don't ever see myself turning from that path. There are others, however, including my new friends, who grew up differently and will not be persuaded from their work or their deeply held beliefs about fighting for God and country. Are we, then, to turn away from each other and deny the goodness we each embody?

Clayton Kratz, who grew up in a pacifist home, had a brother, Jacob, who made the difficult decision to join the army. Kratz did not understand his brother's desire to do this but told his sister Laura, "I hope it is for the best though. It is not a time to worry, but a time when we should all examine our lives and put our trust and prayers in God."

Kratz, who gave his life for the church, would not condemn his brother for his choice of vocation even if it was a decision that went entirely against Kratz's own beliefs.

In Romans 14 Paul says, "Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God."

I've never been able to understand why anyone would think that killing someone else is the way to solve a conflict. I've never been patriotic, except maybe during the Olympics, and have always held a deep cynicism for politics, the military and those who run our country. But meeting the Borgmans and learning about their way of life has taught me a lot about tolerance of other beliefs and how another person may choose to live out their interpretation of God's will.

In his diary, Kratz wrote: Christianity impels people to move from the bottom upwards. Every human life has the power to be changed. We must believe more in each other. This will lead to more belief in God. We must believe that there will be a new world.

Let us learn from his example and work toward a world where all Christians can talk together, learn from each other and push for a day when all people may live without fear and without suffering.

Judy Clemens is the author of Lost Sons*, released by Herald Press in April 2008. She is also the author of the Stella Crown mystery series, set in eastern Pennsylvania. She and her family are members of Grace Mennonite Church in Pandora, Ohio.*

Stockxpert.com

God's communication style is kenotic

by Ted Lewis

In my mediation work with congregations, I have often seen how people in the midst of long-term conflict use defensive styles of communication. In one particular case, I saw how both parties repeatedly used the same words and phrases to defend themselves. These words set up a protective wall between them that prevented new things from being said and heard; the old words and stories continued to dominate the discussion.

At one point, though, something new broke through the wall. Someone acknowledged another's good intentions despite the negative consequences. Then another person made a sincere apology. The old started to give way to the new. Defensive speech gave way to a gentle, bridge-building type of speech. This shift created new life for everyone in the room.

Receiver-focused communication yields something for the sake of the receiver; it is servanthood-oriented.

All communication involves sending and receiving. Yet communication dynamics can vary between sender-focused and receiver-focused styles. Sender-focused communication is defensive; it holds onto something for the sake of the sender. Receiver-focused communication yields something for the sake of the receiver; it is servanthood-oriented. I have called this kenotic communication. Kenotic comes from the Greek word for "empty."

The Bible sheds some amazing insights into the topic of conflict and communication. Most Christians are familiar with Paul's passage in Philippians 2 where Jesus empties himself to the point of death. It's an early, concise hymn of Jesus' mission. But what most Christians don't know is that the context has to do with conflict and communication within the church. Will there be unity or disunity?

After encouraging his readers to live in one accord, Paul warns them to "do nothing out of rivalry or vainglory, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves." This humility is not an inward, pious self-perception; it is an outward, relational humility. Such humility seeks to help others shine where we might want ourselves to shine in social settings.

"Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." This is mediation language. Underneath all of our positions and demands lie our needs and interests. This is where two sides can have more empathy for each other, where walls come down and bridgework can be built. Mediators understand how solutions that meet the interests of all parties can lead to win-win outcomes.

But there's more here than having our own needs met during a conflict. Paul invites church members to fully tune into the needs of others to the extent that new life springs up for others through acts of servanthood. This framing is what triggers Paul to reference the mindset of Christ. Jesus (my paraphrase follows), "did not prize his own self-importance like a Greek or Roman god, but emptied (*kenosen*) himself of this divine status in order to be a true servant for humanity."

This reading fits with the earlier verses. Paul asked his readers to put aside their own self-importance for the sake of unity. He warned against vainglory (*kenodoxia*), which literally means "empty glory." When you try to fill communication space as if your status, your words, your ideas and positions are most important, there is no real substance in that space. But choosing to be empty of all of this through mindful humility results in fullness of new life for others.

This framework has rich implications for congregational patterns of communication. As we recognize our sender-focused styles that pour out of us without thinking, we can begin to shift our focus. We can place a higher emphasis on the receiver and make sure that what we send is yielded to the other's best interests. But to do this, we first have to empty ourselves of our tendency to "grasp" communication energy back for ourselves. This amounts to our laying life down to give life to the other.

The art of listening is vital to healthy receiver-focused communication. When both parties use this style, there is a fruitful outcome; something new is borne out of conversation. But even when another party is sender-focused, you can still engage them in a receiver-focused manner. This resonates with turning the other cheek, going the extra mile and giving your coat—all forms of overcoming evil with good.

While active listening is clearly the overarching discipline in kenotic communication, it relates to a set of skills that can be practiced in our daily conversations. These skills all spring out of the Christ-mindset whereby we clear away our own communication baggage and seek the betterment of the receiver. I will touch on three skills:

the Acknowledgment

Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself … —Philippians 2:6-7a

the Question
the Restraint

Acknowledging the other is a broad category that keeps the communication center of gravity with the other person. Rather than shifting a conversation back to ourselves, acknowledgments keep the conversational ball in the other's court. Nonverbal nods and eye contact can go a long way. Short statements of empathy empowers the other to go deeper. Echoing back or summarizing in fewer words what you've heard validates the other person.

Our society often makes us hurry conversations into solution-mode, and we forget at times that another person may just need to be acknowledged for what they are feeling. Saying, "That must have been really hard for you," is one way to acknowledge. In my experience with victim/offender reconciliation work, I have learned how important it is for both sides to hear acknowledgments. They build trust, and they open the other to go deeper and be more expressive.

The Question also keeps the focus on the receiver. These can be clarifying questions that help you understand another's view better, but questions also convey genuine interest. Questions can effectively prevent conflicts from flaring. One time I yelled at my daughter who was sitting on the front porch, seemingly neglecting her animal chores before her ride to school. Had I approached her with a question rather than a blaming accusation, I would have learned that she was protecting the cat food from our roving, hungry chickens.

One reason Jewish tradition is not known for theological splits as one observes in Christian history is that the question was central to rabbinic education. Different views could coexist—even on the same page of biblical commentary. One way to disarm a heated debate is to ask descriptive questions to the other person. "How did you come to that viewpoint?" Nothing to argue there, since it shifts the conversation into the realm of story. This, then, creates bridgework.

Finally, the skill of Restraint involves our choice to pause or remain silent. Restraint gives us the freedom to mindfully control our communication choices. At the same time it assures us that we do not have to control conversations. A simple pause amounts to yielding communication energy to the other, and it heightens our focus on timely, life-giving responses. In his final hours before the cross, Jesus showed where power resides through the mindful restraint of speech.

Proverbs is full of admonitions to restrain words. Fools do not think before they speak, and their words gush out with folly. Moreover, such words are harmful and they lead to death. In contrast, the wise person chooses few words, gives a soft answer and uses a gentle tongue. These reflect a disciplined mindfulness, and the fruit of restraint is new life for both the receiver and the sender.

These three skills are all responsive. They correspond to God's communication (or revelation) style. They are invitational rather than coercive. They are life-giving, geared for the growth of the other, rather than life-sapping. If our destiny is to mature into God's character, and if this character is best seen in Jesus who took on the "form of a servant," then, as we work out our own salvation in the realm of conflict and communication, our conversation choices will best be informed by the Christ-form.

If our destiny is to mature into God's character … our conversation choices will best be informed by the Christ-form.

Kenotic communication leads us into a mindset where we become good stewards of communication. Just as we mindfully manage our time and possessions, we can mindfully change our default patterns of speech. In either case, trust has to be activated. Radical trust erodes against our habits of blaming and shaming, judging and begrudging. Radical trust, on the positive side, helps us build the life-giving skills of word stewardship.

Working out our own salvation in this area will take work. Change is never automatic, especially when it involves emptying our pride. All of us in the church are in the same boat; we all wrestle with mistrust toward certain people in our weekly lives. Perhaps you find yourself mulling over conflict situations that eat away at your mind. Is it possible that these irritants provide the very context for new growth, new adventure?

Thank God for the amazing resources we have from biblical and church traditions. There is hope for change, or we wouldn't be asked to put off the old and put on the new. With John the Baptist we can say, "I must decrease so he must increase," not out of a demeaning attitude toward ourselves, but out of loving humility toward others so they can shine out in new ways. As we seek salvation in the realm of our talking and listening, we will find ourselves and others redeemed in the pattern of sacrificial servanthood that gives new life.

Ted Lewis is active with the Church of the Servant King in Eugene, Ore. In addition to his restorative justice and church mediation work, he offers workshops on Kenotic Communication for church groups (ted@communitymediationservices.com).

For such a time as this

J. Daryl Byler and his spouse, Cindy Lehman Byler, are Mennonite Central Committee representatives for Iran, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine. They are based in Amman, Jordan.

In early June, Israel conducted a major military exercise believed by many analysts to simulate an attack on Iranian nuclear sites. Iran responded by conducting tests of long-range missiles capable of reaching Israel.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress is considering a bill that calls on the president to initiate an international effort to impose a land, sea and air blockade on Iran that would prevent shipments of gas to Iran and place tight inspection requirements on all shipments of cargo to and from Iran. More than half the U.S. House of Representatives and more than a third of the U.S. Senate support this legislation.

When nations are threatening rather than talking to each other, organizations such as Mennonite Central Committee can sometimes help build bridges of understanding. In light of the growing hostility, MCC plans to strengthen its advocacy efforts and increase people-to-people contacts with Iran. Indeed, face-to-face relationships have been the core of nearly two decades of MCC work in Iran.

Religious leaders have urged presidents Ahmadinejad and George W. Bush to stop using rhetoric that defines the other using "enemy" language.

When a major earthquake in 1990 killed more than 30,000 people and destroyed mountain villages in Iran's northwestern provinces, MCC's first response was to send people, not lots of money. Eventually, MCC helped build 15 health houses—simple primary care centers—for damaged villages and began a long-term partnership with the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

In 1998, MCC started a student exchange with the Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute in Qom—the center of religious training in Iran. Four American couples have studied Farsi and Islam at IKERI while developing friendships with Iranians. During the same period, two Iranians have done Ph.D. work at the Toronto School of Theology and learned to know Mennonites in Ontario.

The student exchange has built a foundation for three academic conferences between Mennonite theologians and Shia Muslim scholars, in 2002, 2004 and 2007.

MCC's Iran program gained high visibility in 2006 when MCC organized the first of three meetings between President Ahmadinejad and religious leaders from Canada and the United States. These conversations have focused on issues that divide our nations as well as ways that people of faith can play constructive roles in building trust. As a starting point, religious leaders have urged Presidents Ahmadinejad and George W. Bush to stop using rhetoric that defines the other using "enemy" language.

MCC's Iran program has two primary goals: to promote understanding and friendship between the people of Iran, Canada and the United States; and to promote peace between the governments of the countries.

In our travel to Iran as MCC regional representatives we have found Iranians—particularly young adults—to be eager for conversation and for relationships with the West that are built on mutual respect.

MCC has increasingly emphasized people-to-people contact as a way of countering misunderstandings and negative images in the media. In January 2008, participants in an MCC Learning Tour spent two weeks in Iran and returned to speak in churches and schools in Canada and the United States. In October leaders from eight Mennonite schools will visit Iran to explore possible professor and student exchanges between Mennonite and Iranian universities. In January 2009, an Iranian religious leaders' delegation—including Muslims, Christians and Jews—plans to visit the United States. The delegation will be hosted by MCC, Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., American Friends Service Committee and several other organizations.

Iran is home to the biblical story of Esther. In reflecting on the meaning of MCC's Iran program at a time of hostile relations between governments, one MCC Peace Committee member recently said that perhaps MCC has also come to this place "for such a time as this." TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Growing compassionate kids**—Jan Johnson
- **Forgiveness as a conundrum**—Marlin Birkey

Single family housing model questioned

Fifty-six from U.S. at the "Peoples' Summit" July 8-10 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Does it matter where and with whom Mennonites live? Yes, according Tom and Christine Sine, authors and futurists who proposed alternatives to the "single family detached house" at the Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada gathering called, "At the Crossroads: Promise and Peril." The binational convention was held in Winnipeg, Man., July 8-10.

"The [single family] model has become normative—as if that's what God had in mind for us," Tom Sine said. "Our houses do reflect our values."

His concerns with the model are three-fold: the environmental footprint, the economic cost to young adults and the costs for the poor.

"To fully understand God," Christine Sine said in a workshop, "we have to be involved in community."

A number of young adults at the summit also shared their concerns about housing and offered new ways to live in community.

Alissa Bender, associate pastor at Calgary (Alberta) First Mennonite Church, said this is her first year not living in community—as she did as a college or seminary student—and she is surprised by how much she has missed it.

Bender said she seeks "a living arrangement where we're not just sharing space but we're a part of each other's lives ... [and] the sustainability questions are definitely big for a lot of people."

Regarding intentional Mennonite communities in the past, Bender said there were painful consequences for some, partly due to "a lack of shared vision from the beginning."

Tom Sine also addressed that issue.

"[The shared purse] is a land too far for many people today, even the younger folks," he said. However, he called on Mennonite colleges and universities to address how school debt generated through high housing costs will affect stewardship activity for young adults.

"The costs for our young people are enormous," Sine said, "and no one's talking about it."

Regardless of the economic challenges young people face, Tom Sine described them as the "creative edge of your church."

Young people are starting their own Web businesses but have no leadership or say in church, he said. "If you want to keep them around, then you need to invite them to own the program."

April Yamasaki, pastor and speaker on July 9, said she was drawn to the Mennonite church because of its community, simple living and peace position. But she reminded the audience that those values are not in the "center." Instead, Yamasaki said, "It's Jesus who holds us all together."

Anna Groff

The band Secondhand Pants performed at the "Peoples' Summit" on July 9. Band members are Curtis Wiebe (left) and Marlon Wiebe.

Tom Yoder Neufeld, professor at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., gave the closing message.

"We in Canada and the U.S. are being tested," Yoder Neufeld said, "not quite like Jesus—who didn't have enough food—but on what we will do with the too much food that we have."

On July 10, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA sponsored a vigil for Robin Long, a war resister seeking refuge in Canada held in detention with plans for deportation.—*Anna Groff*

Note: A longer version of this article is available at www.themennonite.org

End of binational events?

Five-hundred and seventy people attended the summit—56 from the United States. Jim Schrag, executive director for Mennonite Church USA, acknowledged the low number of U.S. Mennonites in attendance.

"Usually the ratios are different than they are today," Schrag said. "There are far more Canadians here today than there are Americans. That presents a good deal more promise than peril."

Peter Epp, 27, a dual citizen who lives in Portland, Ore., said the low numbers at the summit "could signal the death of binational events."

The denominations keep identifying the decreasing trend in numbers with young adults without acknowledging the smaller pools, Epp said.

"We don't realize that with this decline," he added, "we're going to need each other more and more."

Epp's reasons for continuing binational relations include: accountability for the denominations, the ability to hear unique perspectives from both countries, and opportunities to practice the same kind of bridge-building both denominations have made a priority with Mennonite World Conference and with racial/ethnic groups.

"It seems a little empty when we can't cross this small divide," Epp said.—*Anna Groff*

Mennonite elected officials describe how they put faith and state together

How many Mennonites in the United States recently served or currently serve in an elected office at the state or local level? What would they have to say about how their faith relates to the offices in which they serve?

This was assistant editor Anna Groff's assignment. But first she needed to find out how many there are. She did so by contacting each area conference in Mennonite Church USA and asking for names of any officials in the conference. Anna then interviewed five of the 14.—*Editor*

Bob Godshall (R)

Pennsylvania State Representative
Year elected: 1982
Resides in Souderton, Pa.
Congregation: Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton

We all have a responsibility to choose the people who we'd like to have serve us.—Bob Godshall

When Representative **Bob Godshall** started in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives 26 years ago, Republican party affiliation proved important in his area outside of Philadelphia.

"As long as that 'R' was in front of your name," he says, "You were almost automatically elected. But that has changed considerably with the county. I doubt if I ever would've been elected as a Democrat."

His district is strongly pro-choice, but he has always voted pro-life because of his convictions and the importance of being consistent.

"Voting with the way the wind blows on a given day" does not work, he says. He says he has worked to build trust and relationships with his constituents throughout the years.

In general for Godshall, voting is finding that "delicate balance" of his convictions and serving those in his community. Godshall, who calls himself a "conservative individual" says, "I do what I can, based on my area and my constituents." But one is elected to serve, not because he or she is "super-intelligent," he adds. Serving means using political power to enhance communities as "people come to [my office] when they have no place else to go."

When he started in politics, most Mennonites didn't vote, and it was difficult for him when his own people did not support him. "I think we all have a responsibility to choose the people who we'd like to have serve us," he says.

Daniel Grimes (D)

Goshen (Ind.) City Council
1999-2007
Resides in Goshen
Congregation: Berkey Avenue Mennonite Church, Goshen

Daniel Grimes says his identity as a Democrat is a "non-issue." Grimes, who served on the Goshen, Ind., city council from 1999-2007, grew up in Philadelphia where all elected officials were Democrats. Democrats were the first to focus on civil rights issues, he says, and during the civil rights movement many people made sacrifices so he had opportunities they could not have imagined. "Freedom and liberty are not things I take lightly," he says.

Grimes admires Mennonites who are involved with politics that affect their neighbors—locally, nationally and globally. If not, Mennonites are saying, "the government is designed to serve me" like everyone else, he says.

Grimes believes Mennonites involved in political activism should be consistent, work for a "back and forth dialogue" and not advocate only for their own good. Voting is one way to consider others. Each generation has to figure out how to approach politics in their own context, he says.

As an elected official, Grimes voted his conscience but factored in what he heard from citizens. As a Christian and Mennonite, Grimes says he does not separate faith and politics—and admits there are governmental positions he could not hold because of his convictions.

Janet Brown (R)

Nappanee (Ind.) City Council
Year elected: 1994
Resides in Nappanee
Congregation: First Mennonite Church, Nappanee

In ministry and in politics, **Janet Brown** says she goes with the consensus.

"[On city council], I vote for the constituency," she says. "It has caused some real interesting situations."

Riegsecker wary of extremes in both parties; Stoltzfus says neither party is immune from errors; Grimes admits there are some offices he could not hold.

In Nappanee, Ind., a town of about 8,000, "people pretty much let you know what they think," she says.

Involved in politics since age 18, Brown also serves part-time as a retired pastor of First Mennonite Church in Nappanee. Brown has always believed there is a place for Christians to be involved in politics. She described herself as conservative by political standings but had more liberal leanings in her younger years. Now she favors diminished government, is pro-life and opposed to the ordination of "homosexual people," although she would welcome them into her congregation.

The Nappanee mayor saw her as an involved community member and encouraged her to run for office. This had nothing to do with her being Mennonite, she says. In office, she serves with others who profess to be Christian and says she is not a "red hot Anabaptist" herself.

Brown says that every good citizen has a responsibility to push for change in government, not just Mennonites or Christians.

Marvin Riegsecker (R)

Indiana State Senator
Year elected: 1988; retiring
Elkhart (Ind.) County Commissioner, 1985-1988
Elkhart County Coroner, 1977-1984
Resides in Goshen, Ind.
Congregation: College Mennonite Church, Goshen

Indiana State Senator **Marvin Riegsecker**'s political position seemed to happen for a reason in his life. His career in politics began as the county coroner, a non-partisan position, after his conscientious objector-status work conducting investigations for cause of death. After that, his positions as county commissioner and senator fell into place. Still, he admits that political involvement, especially for Mennonites, depends on the individual.

"If you're a perfectionist or an idealist, then politics is probably not where you should be serving," he says.

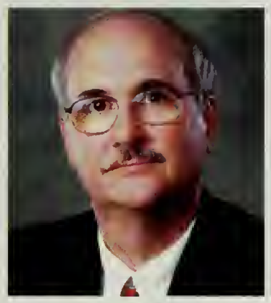
Riegsecker is wary of extremes on both party sides.

"I tend to be more of a middle-of-the-road guy," he says. But party affiliation is important as it makes it easier to accomplish things, he adds. With moral issues—like gambling or life issues—Riegsecker says he follows his moral convictions that are important to him as an individual and as a Mennonite when he votes. With non-moral issues, he tries to vote with what his constituency wants and needs. Throughout these processes, Riegsecker says he works to keep his political power in check.

"If you are in a position to determine what bills are going to be heard, you have some power," he says. "You have to ask yourself, How are you using your power?"

Lowell Stoltzfus (R)

Maryland State Senator
Year elected: 1990
Other offices: chair of county zoning board
Resides in Westover, Md.
Congregation: Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover



Maryland State Senator **Lowell Stoltzfus** says political activism is less important than spiritual commitment.

"If you change people internally and spiritually," he says, "you have far more impact than you do with organizing [political activism]. However, that does not mean "taking a back seat," according to Stoltzfus.

"I think we are in a morally decadent society in a lot of ways and our sense of ethical behavior is declining … I think we should unapologetically be active in our communities," he says.

Stoltzfus adds that activism could mean politics for some, church for others. In both, "justice and peace are important," he says.

When making political decisions, Stoltzfus follows his convictions. However, he says most decisions do not violate his moral convictions—allowing him to be a Christian and a politician.

Stoltzfus says his convictions—being pro-life, fiscally conservative and advocating for small government—cause him to identify with the Republican party.

"It weakens society as people rely on government more and more," he says. "Both are based on a power system, which I find unappealing as a Christian. Neither party is immune from errors and judgment."—*Anna Groff*

Editor's note: The entire interview with each candidate is available at www.themennonite.org. A list of nine other Mennonite elected officials (not interviewed) is also available on our Web site.

How Mennonite Church USA members identify with political parties:

- **Republican (50 percent)**
- **Democrat (22 percent)**
- **Independent (11 percent)**
- **No response (17 percent)**

Source: Mennonite Member Profile 2006

Conference lauds denominationalism

16th Believers Church Conference held June 11-14 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Differences between denominations can be helpful, and when it comes to discussing these differences, the Believers Church tradition has a lot to offer the wider Christian community. This was the prevalent message at the 16th Believers Church Conference, June 11-14 at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Sponsored by CMU's Institute for Theology and the Church, the conference attracted participants from across North America and even Europe. Some 24 scholars presented papers, and three keynote speakers shared their perspectives on the theme, "Congregationalism, Denominationalism and the Body of Christ."

Conference organizers were acutely aware that denominationalism had acquired a somewhat negative reputation over the past century, built by scholars such as H. Richard Niebuhr who described the church's split into denominations as "the moral failure of Christianity."

But this wasn't the view of presenter Sheila Klassen-Wiebe, assistant professor of New Testament at CMU, who opened the conference with a study of the book of John. "John's 'the one and the many' is a fitting symbol for our conference," she said. "The church encompasses unity and diversity. It's united in a common work—bringing God's abundant life to a hostile world. The unity isn't just about potlucks and care groups. There is a missional purpose—'that the world might believe.' But unity doesn't eliminate individuality."

The church encompasses unity and diversity … The unity isn't just about potlucks and care groups. There is a missional purpose.
—Sheila Klassen-Wiebe

For example, she said, John 21 depicts Simon Peter and John, the beloved disciple, as having different callings and different roles in the story.

"It doesn't matter how the two compare, it just matters that they both are faithful to Jesus," she said. "There should be no comparing or competing in the Body of Christ."

The idea of a denominational principle was first articulated in the middle of the 17th century by English Puritans, said Bruce Guenther, associate professor of church history and Mennonite studies at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Langley, B.C.

"I don't believe denominationalism is the cause of the church's disunity," said Guenther. "It began as a tool to exercise influence over the nation."

Denominations have had problems, Guenther said, but also have introduced many benefits. "They've been useful for mobilizing Christians to various kinds of action."

Citing the work of Jeremiah Burroughs, a 17th-century apologist, Guenther explained how differences among Christians can be used by God to bring forth more light on biblical truth. For example, "as the demographic center of gravity for Christianity has shifted southward, North American Christians are gradually becoming more aware and appreciative for the contribution that global theologies have for expanding our understanding of the kingdom of God.

"Denominationalism is not equal to schism," Guenther concluded. "Real schism has more to do with how people leave a congregation and how they characterize other Christians."

Conference keynote speaker, Fernando Enns, would agree.

Enns, founding director of the chair of Mennonite theology at Hamburg University, is a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. His passion is to help the Mennonite church share its insights and also learn from the ecumenical context.

"Our ecclesiological contributions become visible in this [ecumenical] setting," Enns said. "We can share our commitment to visible discipleship and our understanding of the priesthood of all believers," as we converse with people from other traditions.

Interdenominational dialogue forces us "to articulate ourselves," Enns said. "We have to talk about what we stand for, not just what we disagree with. Our dialogue will not leave us unchanged. It will strengthen us from within so that the world may believe. This is the goal of all ecumenical dialogue."

Enns said that conversations with other denominations should be rooted in a Trinitarian framework—giving equal emphasis to all people of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

"A Trinitarian approach would seem appropriate if we want to hold together the various metaphors of the church and take into account the richness of the biblical witness," Enns said.

However, this approach doesn't come naturally for many in the Believers Church stream, which has traditionally stressed Jesus narratives and Christology and has seen the Trinity as a symbol of the bondage of mainline churches, Enns said.

This was the third Believers Church conference held in Canada, with the other 13 occurring in the United States.—*Laura Kalmar for Meetinghouse*

1880 Great Trek leaves Muslim legacy

Escaping Ukraine, Mennonites shared agricultural practices that still stand.

John Sharp

A descendant of Talas Valley Mennonites shares pictures of her mother at her Johannesdorf home in Bakai-Ata, Tallas Valley, Kyrgyzstan. The other women are tour guides, Marina Allayarova, and Olga Shin.

At a Muslim mosque in present-day Uzbekistan, Johann Jantzen baptized Jacob Klaassen in the winter of 1882. Recently, descendants of the two men and members of a North American tour group visited that mosque, recounted the story and reflected on the uncommon hospitality of the Muslim villagers of Serebulak, Uzbekistan.

Serebulak was one stop on the 2008 tour tracing the Great Trek of Mennonites from Ukraine to what is now Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the 1880s. The May 25-June 9 tour explored the stories of Mennonite-Muslim interaction in Tashkent, Bukhara, Khiva and Ak Metchet, Uzbekistan.

In Ak Metchet, the imam prays a springtime prayer of blessing on the year's crops. He performs the ritual on the site of the former Mennonite cemetery—recognition of the fruitful agricultural practices Mennonites brought in 1884. These positive stories have refreshing relevance for current Christian-Muslim conversations.

The tour group also visited the Talas Valley in modern Bakai-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, 150 miles northeast of Bukhara, Uzbekistan. This valley was the destination of the Abraham Peters wagon train from Molotchna colony, later joined by others from the khanate of Khiva.

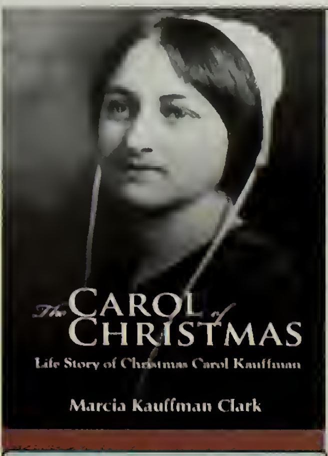
In 1880 and 1881, five wagon trains of Mennonites from Molotchna and Am Trakt colonies in European Russia braved hot desert sands and cold rugged mountains in the journey to Central Asia. They traveled the ancient silk trading routes seeking a new homeland where they could escape Czarist military conscription, find economic opportunities, educate their children and prepare for the imminent millennial rule of Christ.

They founded several stable communities in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, where they shared new agricultural products and new technologies with their Muslim neighbors. More than a century later, Mennonites are remembered by villagers in Ak Metchet for their nonviolent practices, frugal economics and generous wages. In the old walled city of Khiva, a museum set to open in 2009 will feature the culture and craftsmanship of Mennonites who crafted windows, doors and a parquet floor for Nurullabai, a palace for Khan Muhammad Rahim II.

In the Talas Valley the memory of Mennonites is also alive. There the tour group found descendants of Mennonites—one still living in a sturdy Mennonite-built house—a cemetery with common German and North American Mennonite names, and an art museum featuring the work of Theodore Hertzen (Goertzen), a highly regarded German artist and a son of Mennonite parents. He was educated at Bishkek (Kyrzyztan) and Moscow Institutes of Art. He is most well known as a book illustrator.

In 1882, the 72 families of the Peters group, the third and largest wagon train, founded the villages of Nikolaipol, Gnadental, Gnadenfeld and Keppental in the Talas Valley. In 1890 Mennonites, now numbering over 500, spawned a fifth village, Orlov. These five villages formed the Nikolaipol Mennonite colony, now included in the present town of Bakai-Ata, Kyrgyzstan.

After the turn of the century, more villages were founded—one in the Chu River and two more in the Talas Valley. The last village, Hogandorf, was formed in 1909 by immigrants from Ak Metchet.—*John E. Sharp*



Softcover 290 Pages $16.95

Send Check for $19.95 to:
P.O. Box 133 Honeoye Falls
NY 14472. (Includes P&H).
Pastors, Churches, Distributors, Bookstores call for discount.

NEW RELEASE!!

The Inspiring Life Story of one of Mennonite's most beloved authors...

CHRISTMAS CAROL KAUFFMAN

Writer of these timeless classics:

- LUCY WINCHESTER (1945)
- LIFE WITHIN LIFE (1952)
- NOT REGINA (1954)
- HIDDEN RAINBOW (1957)
- FOR ONE MOMENT (1960)
- LIGHT FROM HEAVEN (1961)
- PLUS OVER 100 SHORT STORIES

www.digitalegend.com/carol

Call Toll Free:

877.222.1960

$100,000 milestone for little blue banks

4-year-old Lydia raises money for Colombian refugees by setting the table.

Marie Gehman

Iglesia Menonita de Quito Sunday school teacher Maribel Bravo and students Karime (left) and Saul

As a Mennonite with a growing global consciousness, Lydia Longacre works hard at good stewardship. At age 4, her money already has reached Ecuador. Longacre's congregation, Swamp Mennonite Church in Quakerstown, Pa., chose to participate in Mennonite Mission Network's mission bank project. Through this program, Longacre helped support the ministry of Iglesia Menonita de Quito (Quito Mennonite Church) as it reaches out to Colombian refugees and local children.

Since September 2005, Mennonite Church USA children have been dropping their allowances and earnings into the little blue globe-styled banks in order to help fund Mission Network-supported projects around the world. In April 2008, donations topped $100,000.

According to Sandy Miller, director of church relations at Mission Network, "The goal of mission banks is to help children learn how to share Jesus in ways children can."

Longacre reports, "It makes me feel good to give people money because they might not have food. I set the table to get money to put in the [mission] bank. It was hard sometimes, but I wanted money to put in the bank to help people."

Banks come with curriculum focused on a particular area of need in an international location. Lessons geared at children's time, Sunday school and family time at home teach children what mission workers are doing around the world.

According to Cindy Weaver, minister of Christian education at Swamp Mennonite Church, kids get excited about giving when they know specifically what they are giving to. Weaver says that between January and May, Swamp children raised more than $800 to support Iglesia Menonita de Quito's community outreach that includes providing temporary housing for Colombian refugees and organizing peace education for children in marginal neighborhoods.

César Moya and Patricia Urueña are co-pastors of Iglesia Menonita de Quito and have been working there through a partnership involving Mission Network, the Colombian Mennonite Church and Central Plains Mennonite Conference since 2000. Originally from Colombia, the couple understands the situation refugees are fleeing in that country. They offer their time and energy to help the refugees find the support they need in a new home.

With financial support from Mission Network, the church rents a small house on the outskirts of the city where displaced Colombians can find temporary lodging. To date, the house has sheltered 10 families, one at a time for several months each. Ever since Iglesia Menonita de Quito started aiding refugees, congregants have generously contributed their time and material resources. However, the amount of need quickly surpassed the church's ability to provide.

"It was then," writes Moya and Urueña, "that the help from (Mission Network) became important and this partnership provided money exclusively for the needs of the Colombians."—*Rosabeth Birky Koehn of Mennonite Mission Network; translation from Spanish by Laverne Rutschman*

Sales: Insurance and financial services

Combine your professional skills and your Christian faith values

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

MMA, an established, church-related organization, is seeking sales professionals to provide insurance and financial solutions to one of the industry's most loyal markets.

MMA is a highly trusted organization serving individuals and businesses primarily associated with Mennonite and other Anabaptist-related denominations. Excellent income potential and generous benefits. To learn more, visit www.mma-online.org/careers. Fax or e-mail resume to (574) 537-6635 or hr@mma-online.org.

Bluffton bus crash blamed on signage

March 2, 2007, accident killed five baseball players, driver and his wife.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) on July 8 determined that the probable cause of a crash that occurred on an elevated highway ramp in Atlanta was the motorcoach driver's mistaking an Interstate high occupancy vehicle-only left exit ramp for an HOV through lane. Contributing to the driver's mistake was the failure of the Georgia Department of Transportation to install adequate traffic control devices to identify and distinguish the two different HOV lanes. Contributing to the severity of the accident was the motorcoach's lack of an adequate occupant protection system.

"This accident," said Mark V. Rosenker, NTSB chairman, "demonstrates the need for clear and consistent highway signage and traffic devices across the U.S. interstate system in order to provide reliable guidance to all motorists on our nation's highways. In addition, the NTSB continues to call for a motorcoach passenger protection system which could reduce the number of fatalities and the severity of injuries suffered in accidents like this one in Atlanta."

On March 2, 2007, a 57-passenger motorcoach operated by Executive Coach Luxury Travel, Inc., transporting 33 members of the Bluffton (Ohio) University baseball team, exited the HOV lane of Interstate 75 in Atlanta, entered an intersection on an overpass, overrode a bridge wall and fell 19 feet onto the southbound lanes of the Interstate. Seven occupants were killed: the driver, the driver's wife and five passengers. Seven other motorcoach passengers received serious injuries, and 21 passengers received minor injuries.

As a result of its investigation, the NTSB made five recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration regarding the uniformity of specific requirements, standards and criteria in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The NTSB also made five recommendations to the Georgia Department of Transportation regarding signage improvements. The Board also reiterated four previous recommendations made in 1999 to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regarding the need for improved motorcoach occupant protection systems and the installation of onboard systems that record vehicle parameters and crash data.—*NTSB News*

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"I work to position my teaching on the line between church and culture so that my students understand the resources of the church and are able to use these resources to engage the world. I hope my students can recognize in me, and in my teaching, something that is both faithful and intelligible and able to serve the various cultures that they inhabit."

– Trevor Bechtel, assistant professor of religion

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

- •Editor@TheMennonite.org
- •fax 574-535-6050
- •1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

CALENDAR

Mennonite graduate student conference: The Church, Aug. 7-9; Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.; sponsored by the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre. For more information, including registration, see http://grebel.uwaterloo.ca/tmtc/events.shtml

The 2008 annual meeting of The Casselman Historians is scheduled to be held at the Mountain View Mennonite Church near Salisbury and St. Paul (formerly known as Keim), Pa., Sept. 19 and 20. For further information, including schedules and introduction to speakers, contact Alice Orendorf at 301-245-4326 or 301-501-4326; abcdefor@juno.com; The Casselman Historians, PO Box 599, Grantsville, MD 21536.

WORKERS

Grosh, Jeffrey A., resigned May 31 from ministry at Stony Brook Mennonite Church, York, Pa.

Martin, Floyd M., was licensed for specific ministry as deacon at Green Terrace Mennonite Church, Wernersville, Pa., on Sept. 30, 2007.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bergey, Lily Grace, May 22, to Jesse and Anna Fitzgerald Bergey, Harrisonburg, Va.

Dirks, Margarita "Rita" Ella, born March 12, 2005. Received for adoption on Feb. 27 by Thaine Dirks and Judy Lapham, Minneapolis, Minn.

Guthier, Haley Nicole, June 5, to Michael and Ashley Peters Guthier, Phoenix, Ariz.

Johnston Moriichi, Micah Jeeho, born May 3, 2007. Received for adoption on May 8 by Shuji Moriichi and Ruth Johnston, Minneapolis, Minn.

Nofziger, Mattea Eden, June 23, to Glenn and Erin Kauffman Nofziger, West Unity, Ohio.

Stauffer, Victoria Paige, June 29, to Johann and Bonnie Stoltzfus Stauffer, Lancaster, Pa.

MARRIAGES

Boshart/Wissing: Mikele Boshart, Lincoln, Neb., and Jay Wissing, Lincoln, June 21, at Calvary Community Church, Lincoln.

Brueckner/Hershberger: Diana Brueckner, Pittsburgh, Pa., and Truman Hershberger, Walnut Creek, Ohio, Feb. 14, at Albright Bethune UM, State College, Pa.

Camden/Schacherbauer: Jessica Camden, Phoenix, Ariz., and Kory Schacherbauer, Phoenix, March 22, at Sunnyslope Mennonite Church, Phoenix.

Cherwaty/Leaman: Lori Cherwaty, Quarryville, Pa., and Ashley Leaman, Lititz, Pa., June 28, at the bride's home in Quarryville.

Chlumsky/Hope: Christopher Chlumsky, Wichita, Kan., and Jennifer Hope, McPherson, Kan., June 28, at Countryside Coventry Church, McPherson.

Draper/Kohorst: Jason Draper, Minneapolis, Minn., and Katherine Kohorst Minneapolis, June 14, at Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis.

Driver/Forry: Annette Driver, Lederach, Pa., and Chad Forry, Lancaster, Pa., June 28, at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Gibbs/Miller: Stephen Gibbs, Harrisonburg, Va., and Bethany Miller, Harrisonburg, June 21, at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Godshall/Yothers: Linsey Godshall, Souderton, Pa., and Benjamin Yothers, Souderton, June 21, at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

timely tip:
Practice bicycle safety!

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business. Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

Less mortgage =
more ministry

MMA
Stewardship Solutions

Spending less on your church building could mean you have more to spend on ministry.

Get competitive mortgage rates with no fees from MMA for:

- first mortgage loans,
- construction loans,* and
- refinancing.

Plus, your lenders are fellow church members. Another good example of how MMA provides stewardship solutions to the church community.

MMA's first mortgage church loan rates:

5-year adjustable rate	**6.25%***
3-year adjustable rate	**5.75%***
1-year adjustable rate	**5.00%***

For a free information kit, contact the church mortgage loan department at (800) 348-7468.

*Rates effective July 1, 2008, and are subject to change on a monthly basis. There will be a 1 percent premium on construction loans during the construction period.

Gustafson/Ingold: Kerry Gustafson, Alexandria, Minn., and Timothy Ingold, Phoenix, Ariz., May 31, at Scottsdale Bible Church, Scottsdale, Ariz.

Handrich/Ramer: Monte Handrich, Goshen, Ind., and Monica Ramer, Goshen, June 28, at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hartzler/Pechous: Dan Hartzler, Kalona, Iowa, and Emily Pechous, July 4, in Davenport, Iowa.

Martin/Musser: Kim Martin, Leola, Pa., and Dustin Musser, Narvon, Pa., June 7, at Lauxmont Farms, Wrightville, Pa.

Ropp/Schrock: William Ropp, Watkinsville, Ga., and Carol Schloneger Schrock, Orrville, Ohio, June 20, in Destin, Fla.

Schweitzer/Slaubaugh: Cara Schweitzer, Wellman, Iowa, and Shawn Slaubaugh, Parnell, Iowa, June 7, in rural Kalona, Iowa

DEATHS

Cornelius, John E., 71, Fort Wayne, Ind., died June 3. Parents: Walter E. and Myrl M. Cornelius. Children: Michael E., David L. Funeral: June 17 in Fort Wayne.

Coward, Robert J., 82, Glendale, Ariz., died April 19. Spouse: Ardis B. Kennel Coward. Parents: Alexander Pleasants Holly Coward and Dorothy Elizabeth Davis Greene. Child: Jonathan Coward; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 25 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Detweiler, Warren Wismer, 89, Perkasie, Pa., died June 29. Spouse: Mary Emma Gahman Detweiler. Spouse: Ella Moyer Detweiler (deceased). Parents: Clayton R. and Alice Wismer Detweiler. Children: Betty Bergy, Garry, Mary Navarre, Ray, Darlene Heacock; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 30 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie.

Folk, Ferne Lucille King, 86, Springs, Pa., died June 18. Spouse: Dwight O. Folk. Parents: Daniel H. and Mary M. Hollada King. Children: D. Ronald, Richard A., Linda F. Hardesty; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 20 at Newman's Funeral Home, Grantsville, Md.

Hatfield, Michael Scott, 18, Fort Wayne, Ind., died June 5 of an accidental gunshot. Parents: Robert and Lorena J. Hatfield. Siblings: Jonathan R. Hatfield. Funeral: June 9 at D.O. McCombs and Sons Maplewood Park Funeral Home, Fort Wayne.

Lantz, Roberta Bontrager, 95, Goshen, Ind., died June 30. Spouse: Paul LeRoy Lantz (deceased). Parents: Rolin and Nellie Bontrager. Children: Ann Miller, Robert, Ray; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; one great-great grandchild. Funeral: July 3 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Leasa, W. Kenneth, 91, Frazer, Pa., died June 28 of a stroke. Spouse: Betty Brackbill Leasa (deceased). Parents: Albert Benjamin and Saloma Ann Zook Leasa. Children: K. Varden, Paula Warren, Stephen K.; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 2 at Frazer Mennonite Church.

Schlabach, Daniel D., 82, Winesburg, Ohio, died May 4 of a sudden illness. Spouse: Retha Miller Schalach. Parents: Daniel E. and Amanda Yoder Schlabach. Children: Dave, Brenda Sweany, Bradley, James; seven grandchildren. Funeral: May 7 at Longenecker Mennonite Church, Winesburg.

Shoup, Fannie Kuhns, 82, Mt. Eaton, Ohio, died May 10. Spouse: Melvin W. Shoup (deceased). Parents: William and Amanda Miller Kuhns. Children: Marvin, Doyle, Kenneth, Lester, Milton, Delores Raber, Doris Shoup, Pauline Shoup; 22 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 13 at Longenecker Mennonite Church, Winesburg, Ohio.

Wyse, Ruby Yoder, 86, Archbold, Ohio, died June 25. Spouse: Ora Wyse (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Magdalena Bontrager Yoder. Children: Larry, Gene, Anna Fisher, Susie Wyse; 11 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 27 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Yoder, Lydia J., 98, Wellman, Iowa, died June 22. Parents: Jephthah and Mary Kauffman Yoder. Funeral: June 25 at Powell Funeral Home, Wellman.

Zehr, Ruth Elnora Lais, 84, Goshen, Ind., died May 20. Spouse: John David Zehr (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Ellen Egli Lais. Children: Joan Link, Dianne Schaefer, David; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 24 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

Good work...*advanced.*

Koinonia Mennonite Church (Chandler, AZ) contracted with AAI for a fundraising campaign.

ADVANCEMENT Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Becky Drumm *Principal*

Rich Gerig *Principal*

Mike Wiese, Dan Hess & Sherilyn Ortman, *Associates*

Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

Mennonite youth pastor, full-time position. For job description and congregational information form contact: Jim Cashdollar, **First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.**; 309-696-1943.

Goshen College seeks ***.5 FTE faculty member in psychiatric/mental health nursing*** beginning July 2008. Teach three psych/mental health nursing courses; committee assignments and student advising. MS in Nursing required, Ph.D. preferred. To apply, please visit the employment page of www.goshen.edu and follow instructions. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with the Mennonite Church.

Pastor required for **Good News Mennonite Church**, 2764 Ness Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3J 1A7; Email gnmc@mts.net or doerksen.p.t@gmail.com; phone: 807-548-5169. Competitive salary with benefits.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks a ***full-time volunteer*** to provide hospitality to guests of the AMBS Church Leadership Center and to direct the seminary's volunteer program. The qualified candidate will be highly organized and reliable, have strong interpersonal skills, be open to learning new roles and technologies, and be committed to the mission of the seminary. This two-year term begins in August 2009. Availability for 1-2 weeks of training in late January 2009 a plus. For more information and to apply please visit www.ambs.edu/employment/CLC-volunteer or call 574-296-6269.

Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio, seeks a committed Anabaptist ***pastoral couple to share a 1.5 time position or an individual to serve as a full-time lead pastor***, to focus on preaching, spiritual care and peacemaking. Average attendance is 135. Contact Lamar Nisly at nislyl@bluffton.edu; email: nislyl@bluffton.edu; phone: 419-358-2628.

Coming to **Montreal** for school or vacation? Support a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada project while enjoying Montreal's trendy "Plateau" district by staying at ***Maison de l'amitié Summer Guestrooms and Student residence***. Student housing available for September. 514-843-4356, www.residencema.ca reservations@maisondelamitie.ca.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is seeking a proven missional church leader to inspire, teach and mentor future leaders for ministry from an Anabaptist perspective in missional congregations and organizations. The successful candidate for the ***faculty position in missional leadership development*** will be able to teach skills for assessing ministry contexts in social and theological terms, articulate a robust missional theology that is informed by the local and global church, use local resources and congregations for building an educational program, and model practices that aid the formation of future missional leaders. Capacities for engagement and collaboration with faculty colleagues on the character and practice of missional leadership are essential. Full-time tenure track position; faculty rank is open. Ph.D. or D.Min. desired. More information available at www.ambs.edu/employment/missional-leadership-development. Send letter of application, CV, and list of references to Rebecca Slough, Academic Dean, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, or electronically to rslough@ambs.edu. Interviews in mid- to late September or early October 2008; starting date in early 2009.

Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa., is a Christian relief and development organization with a strong commitment to peacemaking. MCC is seeking qualified applicants for a ***human resources director*** to lead a 16-member department and facilitate a network of practitioners across the agency. A bachelor's degree and five years of personnel experience are required. A job description is available at www.mcc.org/serve. Send resumé and letter of interest to: MCC Human Resources, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501. Application review begins July 14.

the value and values of a goshen education

Unique core values
Goshen's Christ-centered core values are passionate learning, global citizenship, compassionate peacemaking and servant leadership.

Educational value
More than 60 excellent programs of study, with internships and research for undergrads and visionary study abroad opportunities.

Financial value
Our graduates typically leave with less debt than the national average; 99 percent of students receive financial assistance, for an average package of $17,555.

Find out more about Goshen at www.goshen.edu

Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA seeks ***part-time regional pastor***. The regional pastor, with a half-time (2.5 days/week) appointment serves congregations in Eastern Ohio and Northwest Pennsylvania. Qualifications: A minimum of five years pastoral experience within Mennonite Church USA congregations. Preference will be given to people with a seminary degree or reasonable equivalent. The successful candidate will have strong written and oral communication skills, excellent relational skills, demonstrated leadership, with the ability to articulate conference positions with enthusiasm and passion, and a perceptive listener. Candidates must be committed to Anabaptism as expressed in the 1995 Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. Salary/Benefits: The half-time assignment (2.5 days/week) salary will be based on denominational guidelines with proportional health-care benefits, vacation and sick days. Date available: Aug. 1, 2008. Applications: ministerial leadership information forms should be submitted to Tom Kauffman at tekauffman@bex.net, or sent to P.O. Box 140065, Toledo, OH 43614. Applications accepted until July 15, 2008, or until the position is filled. See full job description at the Ohio Conference Web site: www.ohio.mennonite.net.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Philadelphia Mennonite High School (grades 9-12) seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2008-09 school year: ***Full-time science instructor*** (chemistry/physics), ***full-time social studies instructor***. Please send resumé to Barbara Moses, Principal, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130; fax: 215-769-4063; email: mos147@comcast.net.

Hinkletown Mennonite School, a K-8 Christian school, is seeking a ***full-time administrator/director of development*** position available July 2008. This chief executive position is responsible for the daily operations of the school as well as strategic planning and budgeting. Responsibilities include fund-raising, capital campaign, recruitment and donor relations. Supervision of teachers is provided by a full-time Principal. Excellent communication and relational skills are required. A bachelor's degree in education or administration is preferred. Email resumé to boardchair@hmsk8.org or mail to: Roy Hoover, 668 South Kinzer Ave., New Holland, PA 17557; 717-354-7100.

Eastern Mennonite Missions seeks ***full-time associate director of finance*** to carry responsibility for the deferred giving program and assist in overseeing EMM's loan portfolio. Qualifications include: bachelor's degree, five years accounting experience, and strong writing and oral communication skills. Begins Oct. 1, 2008; Application deadline Aug. 8. Contact Jeanette Hunt: jeanetteh@emm.org or 717-898-2251.

Lake Center Christian School in Hartville, Ohio, is seeking a full-time ***junior high Bible teacher*** (grades 7-12) beginning Aug. 15, 2008. Lake Center enrolls 640 students K-12, and is located in the Akron/Canton area. Resumés and inquiries should be directed to: Matt McMullen, Superintendent, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632; email: lccsmmcmullen@yahoo.com; fax: 330-877-2040; phone: 330-877-2049, x 511.

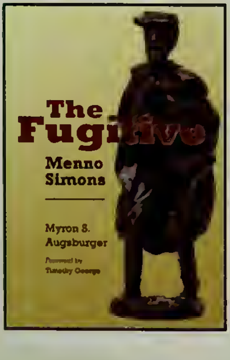
Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

Summer Time Reading from Herald Press

The Family Song

The Family Song

By **Jane Hoober Peifer.** Illustrated by **Ingrid Hess.**
This delightfully whimsical story about the friendly Stranowsky family centers on the song they warble at mealtime, bedtime, and, well, anytime. The song reminds them that God is always with us, especially in life's unpredictable moments. Includes a CD of the book read by the author and a performance of "The Family Song." For ages 4-to-8. Paper (60 pages) plus CD, $18.99



The Fugitive: Menno Simons

It's 1544, Menno Simons, a leader in the new—and persecuted—free church movement, is on the run from authorities in the Netherlands. With a price on his head, he stops to catch his breath and prays, "Lord, what do I do now?" **Myron Augsburger's** historical novel recalls Menno's life—from Catholic priest to radical reformer to hunted fugitive.
Paper, 398 pages, $14.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

Radio in the woods

Anna Groff

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

In July, I drove from Pittsburgh to Holmes County, Ohio, for a weekend of camping and canoeing with my family. I turned off my cell phone and left it in the car when we reached the site, ready for time away from electronics.

Within minutes, I heard an AC/DC rock song blaring from the site on our left and two dogs barking from the site on our right. I thought it would be easier to get away from distractions. But the campground belonged just as much to my music-playing neighbors as it belonged to me.

I could question their definition of spending time in nature, but they could question my lifestyle in the city that requires setting a weekend aside from modern distractions. While our expectations of what "camping" is differed, we had to share that space.

Mennonite camps also struggle with these differing expectations when campers arrive on their properties. Some camps allow cell phones and iPods, but others have strict rules against them.

Corbin Graber, director of Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp in Colorado, said his camp holds to their "no cell phone rule" at camp. To him, it's part of what makes the camp experience distinct.

Mainstream culture also questions what will happen if technology and material things take over our lives. In the new Disney-Pixar film, *Wall-E*, a lone robot lives 700 years in the future on a desolate earth destroyed by Western materialism.

Realizing the influence technology has on my life, I attempt to move in and out of my tech-reliant world. But I cannot expect others to move with me. Guidelines, such as "no cell phones," offer structure.

Other people create intentional spaces for even more extreme experiences that connect people to people—and people to the earth—without distractions from electronics.

In June, Tim Nafziger blogged about the People Against Poverty and Apathy (PAPA) festival held in June at the Plow Creek Community and Mennonite Church in Illinois.

He explained that the PAPA festival serves as unofficial convergence space for the New Monasticism movement; it is marked by communal life, hospitality, engaging with the poor and leading prayerful, contemplative lives.

In addition, a "technology skepticism" was present in varying extremes, Nafziger said. (Some considered themselves Luddite, others did not.) Some people at the festival are wary of the assumption that technological progress is always good and that this myth is part of a global problem—a slightly different approach than the Amish take.

Just as I shared camp space, people at the festival shared space. In one very tangible way, the festival attendees had to address ways to deal with waste at the event. Some used a composting system and others used port-a-johns. But people respected each other's actions.

Among the workshops and worship, Nafziger mentioned the "skills shares" that "offered practical instruction for crafts (knitting, pie baking and fiber crafting), agriculture (animal husbandry and weeding), nature skills (mushrooms, edible wild plants and herbs), performance (drumming, circus skills and henna) and the Chauceresque (pilgrimage, hydrotherapy and midwifery)."

None of these activities used PowerPoint or video clips or an Internet connection—and they required more energy and planning than a weekend camping trip. The activities would have excited and challenged me.

But since I was not at a Mennonite camp or the PAPA festival, I had to bounce back when the radio interrupted the campsite's quietness. The new challenge: being flexible with my neighbors—and not missing my cell phone.

But this campground also had guidelines obeyed by all. At the 11 p.m. onset of "quiet hours" the dogs stopped barking and campers turned off their radios.

Next year, I may reserve a site at the less-crowded national park. But for this year, listening to classic rock in the woods required me to share nature with others while I left my personal distractions at home.—*Anna Groff* TM

Participants in the "Purpose Driven Circus" skill-sharing workshop learn juggling and theology at the PAPA festival June 19-22.

Tim Nafziger

Readers Say continued from page 5.

others speak the healing, challenging, comforting and angry Word of the Lord as they hold their Bibles in one hand and the newspaper in the other.

In an age of instant-everything, sound clips from sermons have suddenly become the way to identify the complete picture of a pastor and her or his relationship to their congregation. My growing concern is whether there exists enough "sound bits" from Mennonite pastors to even gain the attention of the media. Or would our sound bits be so conciliatory they would never make the evening news? Do we as Mennonites understand and appreciate the role of pastor/prophet any better than the media? While I hope so, our lack of attention to this issue leads me to wonder.—*Ron Hunsicker, Lititz, Pa.*

And no tribe of Joseph

I am concerned about the process of how someone qualifies to write in the "Speaking Out" column and any screening of content. There has to be some discretion about what is printed and appropriate for this column. A "thoughtful" article like James Lederach's ("And No Tribe of Joseph," April 15) clearly does violence to the biblical text.

Lederach places the authority behind his remarks on Leon R. Kass' book, *The Beginning of Wisdom: Reading Genesis.* Kass is a professor at the University of Chicago who specializes in biology and ethics, not biblical studies. Those who desire a greater understanding of Kass and the biblical text may want to read Luke T. Johnson's review of Kass' book in *Commonweal* (January 16, 2004). Johnson, a respected biblical scholar who teaches at Emory University, says, "The further Kass gets into Genesis, the [more] his own ideological commitments allow him simply to ignore or actively suppress aspects of the narrative that might easily be read in other ways. The nadir is reached in Kass' treatment of the patriarch Joseph." In other words, Kass is at his worst in his interpretation of Joseph—the section Lederach used to back up his commentary.

As we Christians express our perspectives and opinions, we must be careful to base them on the input of biblical scholars, the counsel of witnesses throughout church history and the broad counsel of the community of believers. If we base them solely on the perspective of one individual, we open ourselves up to serious errors. Let's not read the Bible looking for support for our ideas. Instead, let's take what it teaches and apply it to our lives.—*Keith Blank, Landisville, Pa.*

I enjoyed reading James Lederach's re-viewing of the Joseph story in "Speaking Out" on April 15 ("And no Tribe of Joseph"). In particular, I appreciated his emphasis on the theme of assimilation and separation in the Genesis narrative—a theme that will become key in the story of Israel as a nation in the pre-exilic and post-exilic historical books. This theme plays out alongside the theme of peoplehood and identity. That Joseph is a significant part of that story is clear not only from the number of chapters dedicated to his story in Genesis, but also by the fact that two tribes of Israel bear his name through his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. The latter is such a large tribe that later the northern kingdom will sometimes be referred to as Ephraim. Joseph, the oldest son of Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, receives the father's blessing as the eldest son and inherits a double portion. To say that no tribe of Israel bears Joseph's name is to say that the children of Israel do not bear the names of Abraham and Isaac. This fact does not undermine Lederach's analysis but emphasizes the seduction of the power and our tendency to glorify those who learn to wield it on our behalf.—*Nancy Frey, Cotonou, Benin*

Don't cheapen the term

I appeal to J. Denny Weaver ("Visualizing Violence," May 20) and C. Norman Kraus (Readers Say, June 17) along with many others not to support good arguments by calling bad, but nonviolent, behavior violent. This cheapens the term—a bit like calling "Wolf!" too often when we later need its full effect. My computer dictionary defines violence as "using or involving physical force [my emphasis] intended to hurt, damage or kill someone or something" and also a "destructive natural force," as in "the violent eruption killed 1,700 people." Kraus and others rightly note that some coercion is legitimate.—*Ronald L. Rich, Bluffton, Ohio*

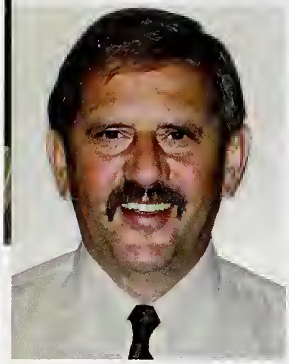
Disgusted by error

I am disgusted by the egregious error in this sentence on page 15 of the June 3 issue: "Our Mennonite church in Chapel Hill, Durham, N.C., receives its organic unity with the Friends from necessity … " That had to be a blunder introduced in the editorial workup of the manuscript because it was not in the submitted text. If you are unsure of something as basic as the location of a congregation, a quick inquiry by email can provide a sure answer.

The correction in the June 17 issue gives some assurance that the error might not be repeated, but it gives readers no hint that the error was an invention of an editor.—*Thomas Lehman, Chapel Hill, N.C.*

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, The Mennonite, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—Editors

************************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 886 15-DEC-09 S32 P5
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947



Everett J. Thomas

'It's all politics'

After they finished speaking, James replied, "My brothers, listen to me … I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God."—Acts 15: 13,19

Every group has within it a structure for organizational leadership. This structure is called "polity." A politician is someone who understands the polity of a group and is a "polity technician." Both leaders and followers can be politicians.

Two experiences during the 1990s brought me to this conclusion: a politician—"polity technician"—can use his or her skills with the group's polity for the good of the group or for the private good of another group or person.

First, I was elected to the Goshen (Ind.) City Council in 1991. In that first four-year term I had a steep learning curve about tax levies, annexations, unfunded mandates and the limitations of our own law-making. The polity of a small town is simple, however. There is a mayor, a judge, a common council and a clerk-treasurer—all elected offices. Every four years we make our case to the electorate about why we should be reelected.

During this same period I also served as a Mennonite Church representative to the committee charged with creating a Mennonite polity for ministerial leadership. We were to have the document tested broadly, revised and ready for the convention in Wichita, Kan., in 1995. At that meeting General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church delegates took a key step toward merger and adopted *A Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership.*

All of us—leaders and followers—straddle two kingdoms, and each has a significantly different polity.

I learned more about politics in that church work than in the city council work. Furthermore, in the last 17 years I've found church politics to be more complex than small-town politics. That's because there is less clarity about the polity within the Mennonite church. But what leaves me cold is when someone, frustrated by a decision in a congregation, an area conference or churchwide assembly complains, "It's all politics."

Of course it's all politics. And my favorite political convention is the one recorded in Acts 15.

The early church had to set its boundaries, and its leaders gathered in what is usually called, "the Jerusalem conference." The result: Circumcision would not be require of Gentile Christians, but they should refrain from eating meat offered to idols or strangled and blood, and they should refrain from fornication.

But the leadership polity of the group was markedly different from ours today. After listening to the debate—with both the apostle Paul and Peter weighing in—the turning point came when the elderly and venerated disciple James said, "I have decided."

Such protocol was typical of the Ancient Near Eastern culture—and continues in some parts of the world today: a venerable and wise elder listens to the arguments, discerns what is best for the group and then makes the decision. The key to this polity as in any other: what is best for the group.

In this year when we elect a president it will be very difficult to discern whether a candidate wants what is best for the whole world, what is best for our country or what is best for himself. That's because both campaigns will have millions of dollars to make their candidate look honorable.

But we do have some Mennonites with experience as elected officials at both the state and local levels (see page 20). For these faithful Mennonites to continue in office as long as they do, they must understand their state's or region's polity.

If asked, they might also help us as a church to think more carefully about our country and our responsibilities as citizens in the most powerful country in the world.

As politicians, all of us—leaders and followers—straddle two kingdoms, and each has a significantly different polity. The first thing we can do is to discern together, with those who are wise and venerable, what is best for each group.—*ejt*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org
August 5, 2008

AUG 5 - 2008

A Bible for every taste?

Page 8

12 Growing compassionate kids

16 Forgiveness as a conundrum

18 Peak oil

32 Preserving access points

Guide her with a light from above

B. Elaine Bryant is prayer coordinator for Illinois Mennonite Conference.

The words to the song "God Bless America" are really a prayer. The words came as a prayer as I experienced overwhelming grief about the sad implications for the nation's well-being, associated with the intentional words and unintentional "misspeaks" by presidential candidates and national religious leaders—as well as distortions by some media representatives, bloggers, supporters of candidates and political parties—that seem more dedicated to inflaming the dark side of human nature than enlightening and encouraging attitudes and behavior that leads to "domestic tranquility."

The words "guide her with a light from above," from the song stood out as the great need. The "light from above"—that has potential to prevent destruction, dysfunction and violence in community, family, international and intra-national relationships—is called the Golden Rule.

It is a rule that has been affirmed for centuries, but eventually laid aside by adherents to many philosophical and religious traditions. Unfortunately, this also includes the so-called right, left and progressive Christians.

Is it not possible that if preachers—whose sermonic words have been replayed over and over again—had applied the Golden Rule perhaps some of the damage done would have been avoided? Since all candidates, media people, party and candidate supporters, bloggers and this writer have misspoken or will misspeak sooner or later, it seems that all of us would do well to consider how we would want to be treated or spoken about when we misspeak.

Would we want forgiveness and mercy or would we want to be hammered over and over again with demands for apologies that when given never seem good enough or sufficient. What if those on the right would follow the Golden Rule when speaking or writing about those on the left, and vice versa? What if those from one ethnic group followed that rule when speaking or writing about other groups?

The same principle would go a long way toward enhancing the witness of the church of Jesus Christ and could help this nation overcome the ways of darkness that threaten us all.

In addition to saying that we should do unto others as we would be done unto, Jesus commanded that we love our enemies, pray for and do them good, in addition to loving one another as He loved.

What if pro-choice and pro-life devotees followed the Golden Rule and the other commands of Jesus in regard to each other? What if peace church members and just war supporting church members did the same? What if gay, lesbian and transgender people and antigay people followed the rule and commands?

Is it not possible that the "light from above" found in the words of Jesus? History and the Bible speak of critical times, when nations had opportunities to be guided by transcendent instructions and wisdom—or "light from above"—but failed to do so.

Could it be that this is the critical time for all the governing and the governed people of the United States of America to embrace and live the Golden Rule that transcends religious persuasions, and for all of us, who claim Jesus as Lord, to obey his additional commands, as well?

I believe this is such a time, because I have children and grandchildren that I want to live abundant and peaceful lives, and because I do love this greatly graced nation, I pray that the majority of us will do so.

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 15, August 5, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412 894 8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

AUG 5 - 2008

BETHEL COLLEGE
BETHEL COLLEGE
R

22

Kristyn's Kitchen

7

8 A Bible for every taste?—*Ann Minter Fetters*

12 Growing compassionate kids
Teaching the kids in your life to have mercy—*Jan Johnson*

14 Bring back the wonder of childhood
Appreciate and enjoy this special, sweet, wonderful—and all too brief—time in their lives.—*Patricia J. Davis*

16 Forgiveness as a conundrum—*Marlin Birkey*

17 Barren wasteland, stunning grace—*Jonathan P. Larson*

19 MCC launches relief campaign for Iraqis
Will distribute 62,000 blankets, 62,000 school kits, 12,000 newborn kits—*Gladys Terichow*

20 Racial/ethnic leaders assess Mennonite Church USA's efforts to dismantle racism—*Anna Groff*

15

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Guide her with a light from above—*B. Elaine Bryant*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking out
Peak oil—*John Gray*

26 For the record

30 Real families
The family we don't see—*Regina Shands Stoltzfus*

32 Editorial
Preserving access points—*Anna Groff*

12

Cover: © Dreamstime.com; photo illustration by Dee Birkey

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

A small summit

Everett Thomas' assessment and reasons for the small registration from Mennonite Church USA members are disappointing ("A Small Summit in Canada," July 8). Personally, I longed to participate in the projected "peoples' summit" but was prevented by a direct conflict with travel to a place of employment.

Are we Mennonite Church USA members really as uncaring as the reasons presented would indicate? I would suggest another factor that may have been a cause. There was little publicity and promotion of the projected "summit." Had there been a more concerted effort, I would argue that there may have been many more interested and concerned, ordinary, non-voting members such as myself who would have made it a priority to attend. The summit being held in Canada should be no barrier.

I pray that Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA will not become so frustrated that we do not continue planning for regular binational meetings. If, at first, you don't succeed ... —*Juanita Shenk, Elkhart, Ind.*

Regarding "Small Summit in Canada" When this was originally talked up it sounded like it would be like the full joint gathering, minus the delegate sessions. We were all excited about it and ready to get involved. And then we waited for the publicity. Silence. By diligently searching, we found the dates on the Mennonite Church Canada Web site. Still nothing in Mennonite Church USA. Eventually some of the light leaked out from under the bushel, and we realized this was not going to involve the youth convention, would not have young adult special features and would have limited seminars. So many things that draw us to Mennonite Church USA conventions were missing. So we, too, did not register. But I can't help but notice that *The Mennonite* chose to comment on the light registration from the United States when it was too late to change anything. Oh, and no; the assumption that Mennonite Church USA would reciprocate was not "implicit," as Everett Thomas says in his editorial. It was part of an agreement that Mennonite Church USA broke. —*R. Victor Klassen, Webster, N.Y.*

Editors' note: To publicize the Peoples' Summit, Mennonite Church USA distributed posters, bulletin inserts and emails to congregations beforehand and publicized the event in Equipping *and on its Web site.* The Mennonite *included information about and articles related to the summit in the Feb. 5, May 6 and June 3 issues. Our research discovered no explicit agreement that Mennonite Church USA would hold its assembly in Canada.*

One Big Board won't work

The July 8 *The Mennonite* was an excellent issue with very good content: articles, reports, letters and the meaningful "Prayer for Peace." We are most grateful to Anna Groff for her clear reporting ("All-board Meeting Looks at Proposal") on the Columbus, Ohio, meeting—called by the Executive Board in late June—in addition to the Mennonite Church USA report ("Executive Board Defers One-board Idea").

It is more than evident that One Big Board can't begin to competently work through all the issues and business involved in each of the specialized boards.—*Wilma Shank, Goshen, Ind.*

Executives are already accountable

Appropriate patterns of accountability, for the accessibility and use of resources provided by the congregations, are inherent to the very nature of Christ's church. However, is the call for Mennonite Church USA agency executives to be accountable to the executive of the Executive Board really an appropriate pattern? Such executives are already fully accountable to their own boards. Is it not these respective boards that are appropriately accountable to the Executive Board as the representative of all the church's congregations?—*David A. Shank, Goshen, Ind.*

Something good about United States

I've been a subscriber to *The Mennonite* and its predecessor for over 40 years. Joseph Graber's comment (Readers Say, June 17) about "always damning the United States" struck an agreeing chord with me. Criticism of our government's

IN THIS ISSUE

Ann Minter Fetter (page 8) calls our attention to the proliferation of "study Bibles that are tailored for specific readers ... designed to appeal to every demographic imaginable" and cautions about the supplementary material in some of them. The cover image created by our designer, Dee Birkey, illustrates the trend. "The adolescent is carrying one of the new (pink) metal Bibles," Birkey said, "the hip thing Christian youth like for backpacks." Two articles also address parenting issues. Jan Johnson (page 12) offers suggestions for "Growing Compassionate Kids," and Patricia J. Davis (page 14) calls us to "Bring Back the Wonder of Childhood." In the news section, Anna Groff interviews five Mennonite Church USA leaders about one of our denomination's primary goals: dismantling racism in the church (page 20).—*Editor* actions seems to have been a continuous thread for most of these years that I have received this publication.

Let me testify to something good about the United States. The government allows me personally to enter the Pentagon on a regular basis and place Christian books on the Choice Books displays. In 30 years of delivering books there, I have sold a significant number of titles by our Anabaptist authors.

Choice Books is also permitted to have displays in 120 stores on military bases across America. From these displays, thousands of books and Bibles go into the hands of shoppers and readers. While our government does not operate from the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, and never will, it allows us to take that message onto its military bases. What other nation in this world would allow peaceful Anabaptists to enter their military headquarters and bases and market the gospel? This gospel has changed personal lives and even brought people out of the military into the Anabaptist fold.—*Simon Schrock, Catlett, Va.*

Expelled review is frightening

Regarding "Clearly the Product of Intelligent Design," (Mediaculture, May 20) and the review of *Expelled*: Steve Carpenter's reckless insinuation of a connection between Charles Darwin and the Nazis is frightening. Darwin, a lifelong Christian and an astute observer, set out on the "Beagle" to observe and discover, not turn the Judeo-Christian world on it's head—though that may have been a worthy goal. Sloppy data and sloppy filmmaking exist on both sides of the political aisle; *Expelled* only adds to the proof of that fact.

What Carpenter is saying reminds me of a Congressman who recently convened an investigation (at taxpayer expense) into liberal prejudice in the classrooms of institutions of higher learning. He was convinced that conservative students and their ideas were being suppressed. His findings came to nothing, and he was laughed out of the public discourse—kindly thanked for wasting our time and money. No one to the left of John Hagy believes there is any value in abusing science to lift up Jesus Christ, yet it goes on with no end in sight.—*Duane Yoder, Akron, Pa.*

Carpenter responds

In the past six years I have penned dozens of film and book reviews that have appeared in several print and online venues. However, none generated as strong a response as my review of *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*, published by *The Mennonite* on May 20. Ben Stein's controversial documentary concerns the apparent lack of intellectual freedom in the science departments of public colleges and the stigma attached to any professor who allows for the possibility of Intelligent Design (ID).

Three letters to the editor and three e-mails all questioned my favorable review of *Expelled*. I did not take the criticism personally. After all, I'm not a scientist, just a film critic—a guy who likes movies, has strong opinions and can write. For the most part, they were more upset with the film's premise and conclusions than my review.

To be fair, I also received a few favorable verbal comments. One friend loaned me a DVD called "The Case for a Creator: A Journalist Investigates Scientific Evidence That Points Toward God." As a way of continuing this conversation, I have written a review; it is posted at www.Thirdway.com/mm. Reader comments may be posted below the online review. The DVD includes 30 minutes of bonus material that address several questions, including the one raised by Arden Slotter in his letter to the editor (Readers Say, June 17) about the necessity of having the ability to test and prove a theory to be false.—*Steve Carpenter, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Editors' note: With these two letters, we discontinue discussion in Readers Say regarding the May 20 Mediaculture column.

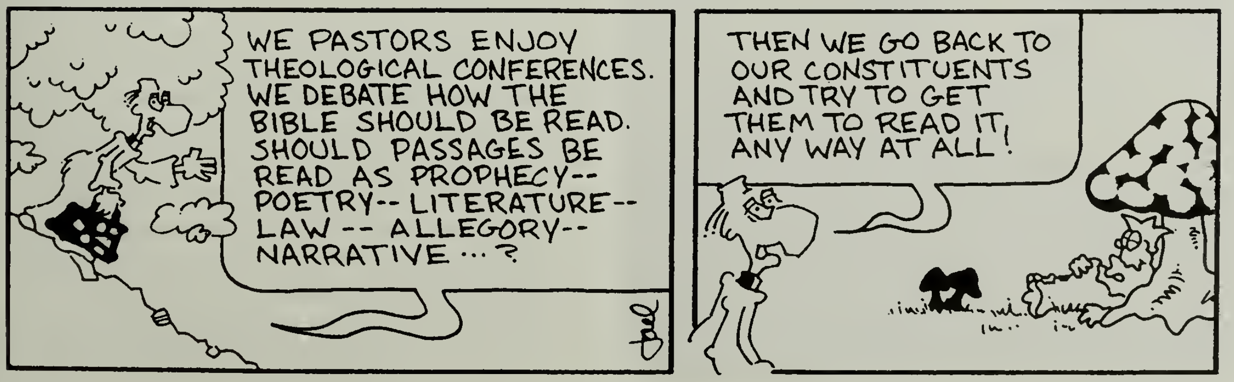
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

My favorite Bible translation is: (61 votes)

- ○ NRSV (39 %)
- ○ NIV (38 %)
- ○ KJV (8 %)
- ○ The Message (2 %)
- ○ Other (13 %)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


WE PASTORS ENJOY THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCES. WE DEBATE HOW THE BIBLE SHOULD BE READ. SHOULD PASSAGES BE READ AS PROPHECY-- POETRY-- LITERATURE-- LAW -- ALLEGORY-- NARRATIVE ... ?
Joel
THEN WE GO BACK TO OUR CONSTITUENTS AND TRY TO GET THEM TO READ IT, ANY WAY AT ALL!

IN BRIEF

EMU sets new contributions record

Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., received $5,211,528 in total contributions for the 2007-08 fiscal year ending June 30—a 3.7 percent increase over the previous year. Kirk L. Shisler, vice president for advancement, reported that contributions of $1,857,265 to the University Fund set a new record, surpassing the 2007 annual fund total of $1,764,068 by $93,197 or 5.3 percent. Shisler reported that giving to EMU's endowment fund was also up. Gifts to the endowment totaled $1,102,162 representing an increase of 46 percent over the previous year. According to Shisler, this was the second year in the past 10 when gifts to the EMU endowment surpassed the $1 million mark. A combination of outright gifts and bequests from donors' estates accounted for the contributions to EMU's endowment fund.—*EMU*

Hesston plans centennial

Plans are underway to celebrate Hesston (Kan.) College's centennial during the 2009-10 school year. The theme is "Living The Vision: Hesston College 1909-2009." The first day of classes was Sept. 22, 1909, for Hesston College, known then as Hesston Academy and Bible School.
—*Hesston College*

Rubber bullet injures CPTer in West Bank

NI'LIN, WEST BANK—On July 10, Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) member Kathie Uhler, a Franciscan Sister, and John Lynes attended a demonstration at Ni'lin protesting Israel's construction of the annexation/security wall there that will confiscate one-third of the village's land.

The march began at 10 a.m. Twenty minutes later, Israel Defense Forces launched the first of innumerable rounds of tear gas. The crowd, heading toward the wall construction area, moved to a ridge, then down through olive groves and up an incline to the next ridge.

As the demonstrators fled the teargas, a soldier shot Uhler in the right hip with a rubber-coated bullet. When paramedics approached her with a stretcher, Uhler said she did not need to be carried, but they whispered, "All of us will be protected as we carry you."

The march ended at noon and Uhler, with Lynes, was able to continue on foot back into the village center.—*Christian Peacemaker Teams*

Mennonite Historical Library gets rare book

GOSHEN, Ind.—Adding to its already extensive list of original Anabaptist writings, the Mennonite Historical Library (MHL) and Goshen (Ind.) College recently purchased a rare book of Anabaptist martyr accounts and hymns that predates *Martyrs Mirror.* The 1567 fourth edition copy of *Het Offer des Heeren* (A Sacrifice Unto the Lord) is only the second known copy in the world—the other is in the Amsterdam Mennonite Library. Its anonymous editor gathered together descriptions of the suffering of Dutch Anabaptist martyrs, along with letters to future generations, eyewitness accounts and hymns written by imprisoned Anabaptists and others describing their deaths.

"Given the central, almost iconic, role that the *Martyrs Mirror* has held in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition," says professor of history John D. Roth, the director of the MHL, "it makes sense that we would go after the books that helped to shape that text. Unlike *Martyrs Mirror*, the 1567 version of *Het Offer des Heeren* appeared at a time when Anabaptists were still being martyred."

The book, which is small enough to fit in a pocket, describes itself and its contents as including "many lovely examples of men and women who sought Christ Jesus and eternal, everlasting life with faithful and pure hearts."—*Goshen College*

photo provided

Bluffton MBA students study Chinese economy

Tosha Fader, Mark Marshall and Bill Lyons sample Chinese fare in June when current students and graduates of Bluffton (Ohio) University's Master of Business Administration program participated in an inaugural cross-cultural study experience in China.—*Bluffton*

Motorbikes reach Congolese church leaders

NEWTON, Kan.—In a July 7 e-mail to Mennonite Church USA leaders, Reverend Benjamine Mubenga Wa Kabanga, president of the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Congo (CEM), shared photos of local church leaders receiving motorbikes purchased as gifts from Mennonite Church USA congregations and members.

"These motorbikes will reduce transportation difficulties for the members of the National Management Committee and several Heads of Missionary districts of CEM," Mubenga said.

While on a visit to Canada in May, Mennonite Church USA leaders presented Mubenga with a check for $20,000 to help purchase motorbikes for Mennonite church leaders.

The check represented the desire of people in the United States to walk alongside sister congregations in Congo, said Ron Byler, associate executive director for Mennonite Church USA.

Mennonite Church USA, with assistance from Mennonite World Conference, is developing a church-to-church relationship with two church conferences in Congo: CEM and Congo Mennonite Church.—*Mennonite Church USA*

Church plants blossom after Kenya crisis

NAIROBI, Kenya—Even as they rose from the ashes of the post-election crisis that shattered their nation, Kenyan Mennonites hosted a World Missions Institute (WMI) for 30 East African mission leaders from eight nations, May 3-24, at the the Mennonite Guest House.

"This WMI more than met the goals we had for equipping East Africans for mission and church

Kristyn's Kitchen
Cookies For Hunger Relief

Melissa Engle

ung entrepreneur donates half of earnings to MCC

istyn Rohrer, at her market stand, set up Kristyn's Kitchen for
r school's young entrepreneurs contest. She was one of the
winners in her age group, and she donated half of her
rnings from her sales to Mennonite Central Committee
CC). The top winners in the contest won a stand for a day at
ocal farmer's market, Root's Market in East Petersburg, Pa.,
ere they could sell their wares. Rohrer decided to donate
lf of her earnings from the school fair to MCC. After deduct-
ingredient costs, Kristyn raised $594.75, generating
16.58 to give to MCC (half the earnings plus the contents of
donation bag at her stand).—*MCC*

planting," said Philip Okeyo, coordinator for the East African Council of Mennonite Churches. Okeyo said he found the combination of teaching on cross-cultural missions in Africa along with practical case studies from Kenyan communities in Olepolos and Thika powerful.

Clair Good, representative to Africa for Eastern Mennonite Missions, worked closely with the Kenyan planners.

"After two weeks of input," Good said, "we sent the group out to four different ministry locations all over Kenya."

Okeyo said four new churches got started.

"People were really fired up," he said, "as they saw the results of immediately putting into practice what they'd been taught."

"Even before returning to Nairobi, the teams sent joyful reports of God at work," Good said. "Four came to Christ in one location. In Chipolete, a town that had been a flash point for tribal and political violence, they had to rent a hall to accommodate 28 new believers."

The institute concluded after the teams came back together at the guest house to share their outreach experiences and learnings with one another.—*Eastern Mennonite Missions*

Hallmark to feature Mennonite Media films

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Hallmark Channel, now available in 84 million homes, will air Mennonite Media documentaries Sundays in August. The documentaries tackle the topics of addictions, hunger, forgiveness and aging on the following schedule:

August 10: *Hunger No More: Faces Behind the Facts*

August 17: *Journey Toward Forgiveness*

August 24: *Embracing Aging: Families Facing Change*

"This is unprecedented for us," said Burton Buller, director of Mennonite Media, of the scheduling during the World of Faith & Values time block from 7-8 a.m. ET/PT and 6-7 a.m. CT.

Mennonite Media has been connected to Faith & Values Media since its inception when the National Interfaith Cable Coalition launched a faith-related channel in 1988. Eventually the channel became Hallmark Channel. Mennonite Media is a department of Mennonite Mission Network. —*Mennonite Mission Network*

Peaceful pastor beats air force in Germany

REGENSBURG, Germany—Liesa Unger, who with her husband, is pastor of a Mennonite church in the Burgweinting district of Regensburg, stopped noise pollution by the national air force.

For years Regensburg citizens tried unsuccessfully to stop the low-level flights over the district. Low-level flights are legal in Germany except over large cities. In January 2008, they experienced the noise of an extremely low-level flight. Unger wrote to the air force, asking for an explanation. The air force said that flights as low as 150 meters are legal anywhere except over cities with a population of more than 100,000. Burgweinting has a population of only 9,000, but for more than 30 years it has been a district of Regensburg, a city of more than 100,000.

Unger wrote another letter, this time to the Department of Defense. She asked why the air force was not respecting the political boundaries of the city. The Department of Defense responded with a letter of thanks to Unger for exposing a mistake in air force maps. The Minister of Defense then instructed the air force to stop low-level flights over Burgweinting.—*Mennonite World Conference, with assistance from Die Brücke*

—*compiled by Anna Groff*

IN BRIEF

Man makes inconvenient choices

Last December, Kurt Hoelting decided to live car-free for one year. Restricting himself to travel primarily by foot, bicycle or kayak will keep him within a 100-kilometer radius of his home on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound. Inspired by Al Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, Hoelting believes this lifestyle change is one everyone will need to make eventually to deal with the challenges of global warming. He doesn't know what he will do after the year is over, since his work usually demands quite a bit of travel, and he likes traveling to distant places. Hoelting, who has a degree from Harvard Divinity School, differs in some ways from Gore: It is not enough to change lightbulbs, laws and technologies, Hoelting says; personal transformation is necessary. —*insidepassages.com*

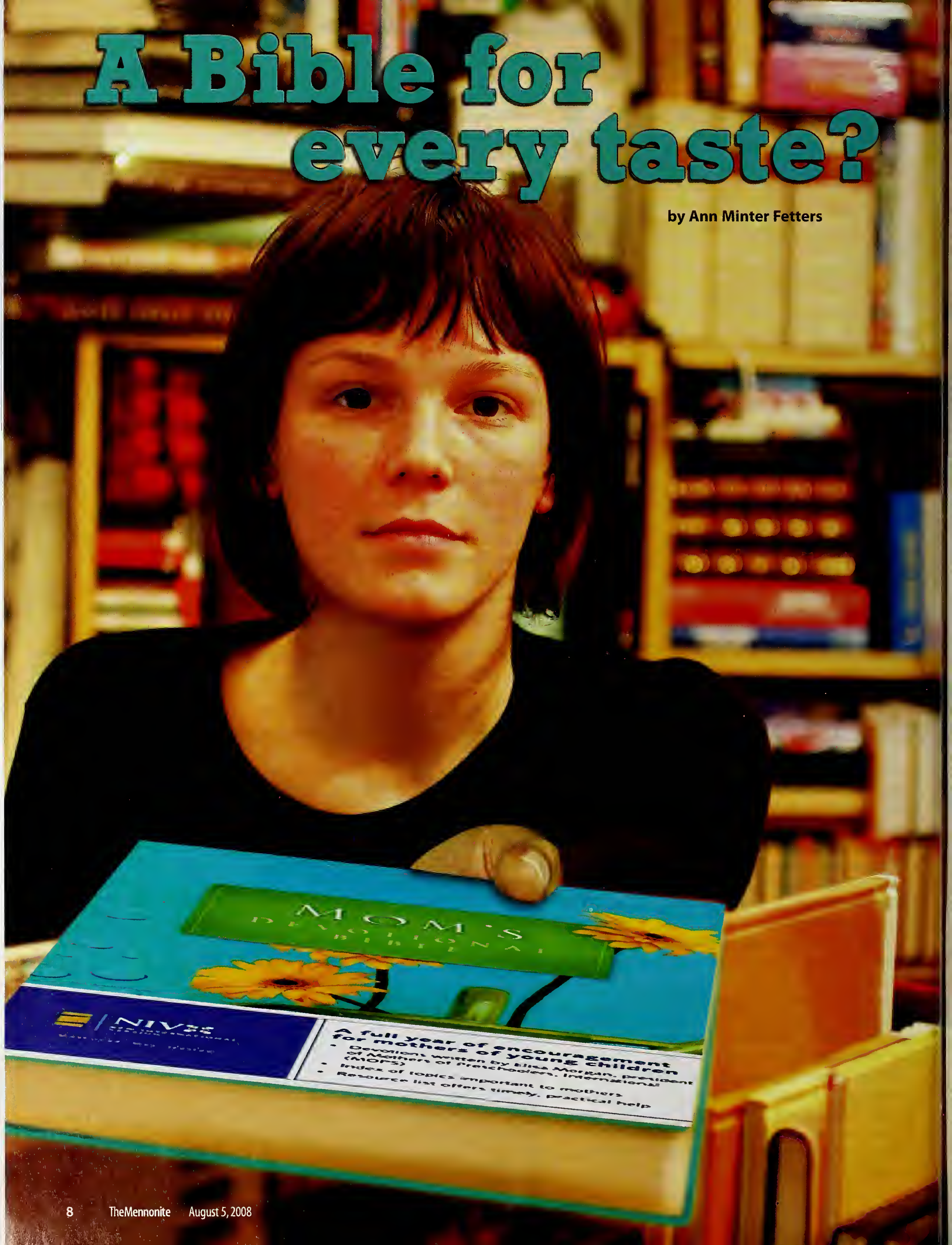
EMU names new SPI director

Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., has named Sue Williams as the new director of the Summer Peacebuilding Institute. —*EMU*

Correction: Lindsey Shertzer's state championship for a 600 meter run in 2007 was Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School's first state championship. The LMS girls' soccer team, reported in our July 8 issue, was the first team state championship.

A Bible for every taste?

by Ann Minter Fetters


MOM'S
DEVOTIONAL
BIBLE
NIV
A full year of encouragement for mothers of young children
• Devotions written by Elisa Morgan, president of Mothers of Preschoolers, International (MOPS)
• Index of topics important to mothers
• Resource list offers timely, practical help

Walk into any Christian bookstore today and you will see evidence of a phenomenon that is sweeping the Christian publishing industry. Study Bibles that are tailored for specific readers are now designed to appeal to every demographic imaginable. *The Busy Woman's Bible. The Girl's Life Application Bible. The Couple's Devotional Bible. The Dad's Bible.* Even *The Outdoor Bible.* It is printed on folded plastic sheets that can be "rained on, snowed on or fully submerged—with no damage," according to the publishers who also offer a version in a camouflage bag for soldiers.

What has spurred this trend?

"People still have tremendous interest in this book, and they want to make it their own," says Wayne Hastings, a spokesman from Nashville's (Tenn.) Thomas Nelson Publishing, the largest Christian publishing house and second-largest seller of Bibles nationwide.

"People are searching," says Chris Faatz, a bookstore manager in Portland, Ore. "Customers want something that speaks exactly to their life."

A literal translation is great, says Rev. Cliff Olson, pastor at Golden Hills Community Church in Brentwood, Calif., "but if no one understands it, it defeats the purpose."

No longer do we merely find shelves full of leather-bound, plain-colored, golden-edged translations such as the King James Version, the New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

Now, covers are splashed with misty pictures of roses and coffee cups for women, a torn-denim look for teens and bright pink polka dots for girls.

While these themed Bibles feature traditional translations as their basic text, they are augmented with side comments, journaling prompts and reflections that are tailored for their category of readers. And herein lies the issue: This additional material includes interpretations coming from the publishers themselves. Some church leaders warn that this can be dangerous.

"People purchasing these popular study Bibles need to think pretty carefully about what they are buying," says Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, associate dean for leadership education at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. "On the one hand, I want more people to read and grapple with the biblical story, and so getting the Bible into more hands seems like a good thing. On the other hand, these Bibles typically contain not only the biblical text and textual notes, but also a great deal of interpretation. This interpretation can come from any number of thought streams and may or may not be faithful to the biblical text."

Let's take a look at a few samples.

Religious leaders must understand that the traditional black-clad Bible is a thing of the past.—Stewart Heller

In *The Boy's Bible: The Ultimate Manual*, we find a hardcover book that announces, "Finally, a Bible just for boys!"

The introduction lists in bullet form what the book contains:

Discover gross and gory stuff

Find out interesting and humorous Bible facts

Apply the Bible to your own life through fun doodles, sketches and quick responses.

Learn how to become more like Jesus mentally, physically, spiritually and socially.

Published by Zonderkidz, a continual theme runs through its pages: be a "252 Man, the image found in Luke 2:52 that speaks of Jesus' own boyhood: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and years, and in divine and human favor."

Graphics, sidebars and spaces for journaling are found on nearly every page, speaking to the topics in the biblical passages. For instance, integrated in the midst of an Old Testament passage, where it speaks of different nations waging war, the topic of violence is addressed: "There's noth-

© Dreamstime.com

ing wrong with healthy competition and physical sports … but God hates violence … yet tons of movies today star so-called 'cool rebels' who take the law into their own hands and kill people left and right. And what about video games that let you gun down goons and blow them away? Being violent, filling your mind with violent trash and having violent thoughts is not cool. If you want to be cool, value the things that God values. Respect life and avoid violence."

However, a red flag for some would be the translations that are infused with the particular thoughts of popular writers today.

"Big-name authors that customers know and trust also help sell Bibles … *Nelson's Inspirational Study Bible* with text by Max Lucado and *The Renovare Spiritual Formation Bible* with text from Richard Foster are cited by publishers and booksellers and managers."

People are searching. Customers want something that speaks exactly to their life.—Chris Faatz

One such example of this type is *The Power of a Praying Woman Bible* with reflections by writer and contemporary Christian singer Stormie Omartian. In one sidebar accompanying the passage in Ephesians 5 that declares men are to be the "head of the wife," Omartian adds a sidebar entitled, "The Importance of Spiritual Authority."

"More and more believing women," Omartian says, "are being given an open door to become all they were created to be … they are realizing they are not just an afterthought in the order of God's creation … they are enabled to fulfill their destiny because more men are rising up to their place of spiritual authority and leadership … If a woman will trust God's power to flow through the authorities he has placed over her, she can bloom and grow and change her world by the power of God's Spirit."

Some Christians would be troubled by the concept of inherent male leadership—but also in the underlying message that a woman's role is to be reactive to that of a man's, not proactive.

And what about the series of Bibles geared toward branches of the military, such as *The Soldier's Bible* and *The Airman's Bible*?

Implicit (or explicit) in these translations is the notion that the Christian who serves in the armed forces is fulfilling God's call by protecting the United States. The language in the introduction likens modern warfare to spiritual warfare, using war language in its approach to Scripture. For instance, *The Marine's Bible* states that many of the Roman military men mentioned in the New Testament were "men of character," pointing specifically to the soldier who stopped Jesus on the road and proved his faith by asking that Jesus perform a miracle to make his servant well.

"Just say the word and he shall be healed," the centurion is quoted as saying in Matthew 8:5.

This Bible features readings in the back that include the Pledge of Allegiance, the Star-Spangled Banner, the Oath of Allegiance for Enlisted Personnel, President George W. Bush's Inaugural Address and General George S. Patton's Prayer leading into battle.

Stewart Heller, executive director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Media, says, "Religious leaders must understand that the traditional black-clad Bible is a thing of the past. To the degree that [publishers] can create an alternative to pop culture, they're smart. This is a battle for minds in the media. If you're going to compete, you better get up to date, or your show will get canceled, so to speak."

A product that seeks to compete with popular culture in a more radical way is the "Biblezine." It is a magazine format featuring passages from the New Testament along with articles that address modern-day topics related to the readings. Most often geared toward young people—primarily girls—they promise "tips on beauty, boys and battles with Mom."

"Unlike the baby boomer generation," says Rev. Olson, "today's teens bring little religious literacy with them. The Biblezine's accessible images and text help bridge the gap."

However, Rebecca Rosen Lum, in her article, "In the Beginning was the Word, and it was so Cool," writes that "Feminists [have] chastised Thomas Nelson [publishers] for claiming to promote a healthy body image while filling the Biblezine with photos of slim, pretty girls in midriff tops." She adds that "Liberal Christians [have] balked at the conservative political slant of the advice."

"What you hope is that [these are] like a preschool Bible," says Bill Leonard, dean of the Wake Forest (N.C.) University School of Divinity, "and that teens will grow out of them."

How has this trend affected the Mennonite church?

"I don't see many 'trendy' study Bibles carried by my parishioners," says Louise Wideman, associate pastor at First Mennonite Church in Bluffton, Ohio. "But we do occasionally use Eugene Peterson's *The Message* in our services to give a fresh hearing of a familiar story."

Phil Waite, pastor at First Mennonite Church in Moundridge, Kan., can relate.

"I have a number of people in my church for whom the Bible has come to life because of *The Message*," Waite said. "Peterson calls his work an 'imaginative translation,' meant to especially help lay people in biblical study."

"What is needed to motivate Bible reading," says Gingerich Longenecker, "more than these popular Bible packages is for groups of friends to get together to study the Bible regularly, pooling not only their own ideas but utilizing the tools of in-depth biblical scholarship that are widely available. The *Harper-Collins Study Bible* or the *Oxford Study Bible* is a great place to start.

"As for the other study Bibles," says Waite, "the content and quality vary widely with a wide range of theological biases. I just want people to read and study the Bible, and I guess I get less concerned about the theological content. In an age of growing biblical illiteracy in the church, I am thrilled when people take reading the Bible seriously, even if the accompanying interpretations are at odds with my own."

Says Wideman, "Someone in my church did say recently that they'd rather have their child reading a trendy version of the Bible than no version at all."

Ann Minter Fetters lives in Wichita, Kan., where she teaches English at Butler Community College and is a member of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church.

These Bibles typically contain not only the biblical text and textual notes, but also a great deal of interpretation. This interpretation … may or may not be faithful to the biblical text.—Jewel Gingerich Longenecker

Growing compassionate kids

by Jan Johnson

Now and then in quiet moments, we dream for our children and grandchildren, nieces and nephews. We wonder how we can help them become adults who know God and who build loving relationships. What will help them learn to offer cups of cold water to the thirsty? Can they set aside the pull of materialism to make a difference in the world God so loves?

Being intentional in daily life: Time pressure thwarts our efforts. What with doctor's appointments, soccer games and homework obligations, we have to be intentional as we do the things families usually do.

For example, running errands is a typical family chore, but Sharon Norris, a teacher, developed a project for her boys and herself during summer vacation days. As they visited museums and ran errands, they often ran into folks holding signs that read, "Will work for food."

In the mornings before they left, they packed three or four sandwiches. So instead of zooming past hungry folks, they stopped, talked and handed them a bag. (Another idea is to keep "basic bags" in your car to hand out: plastic bags filled with a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo, comb and a washcloth. Baby powder for sore, tired feet adds a special touch.)

Volunteering as a family: One of the best ways to help kids experience being the hands and feet of Christ in this world is volunteering with you, the parent, as a fun partner. By your example, you already show your children how to shop, relax and eat fast food—doesn't it make sense that you would show them how to serve by serving alongside them?

Serving together gives families quality time to spend together. It relieves the guilt parents feel when they're torn between serving others and spending time with family. If your kids are naturally shy, volunteering alongside you will help because you're the adult in their life who provides them security.

One of the best ways to help kids experience being the hands and feet of Christ in this world is volunteering with you.

Teaching the kids in your life to have mercy

That's not to say that every organization knows what to do with an entire family. When I called the volunteer coordinator at a downtown shelter to volunteer my family, she was stunned by my request. We wanted to serve at a "neighborhood picnic" on the Fourth of July just after the Los Angeles riots.

"We've never had a whole family volunteer before," she said. "This is so unusual. Your family can join the college group that's coming."

And we did. As anyone might guess, our 11- and 12-year-old children worked harder that day than they've ever worked in my kitchen. They cleaned up spills and cooperated with each other (gasp!) without one hint from Dad or me. I didn't growl when they accidentally splashed red punch on our white shirts. The four of us worked side-by-side, listening to guests' stories and holding undernourished, cooing babies. When one of us got tired, another filled in. After this introduction, my kids have continued to volunteer at nearby missions and enjoy it.

We always try to mix fun with service so we were planning to take them out for a treat. But something better happened. After serving the meal, we explored the crumbling walls of the mission. When we were ready to leave, the kitchen help sat our two kids on stools and gave them huge tubs of ice cream to enjoy. It was a memorable day in the life of our family.

But what can kids do? The main roadblock to family volunteerism is finding projects that are suitable for whole families. Consider these ideas:

Help with kids. Help a church in town that has a latchkey program or a summer "sidewalk Sunday school." You and your kids can do simple things like serve refreshments. Or you can babysit at a transition home for new teenage mothers. (This can lead naturally to later discussions with children about the consequences of unwise sexual behavior.)

Serve a holiday dinner at a street mission. The simplicity and gratefulness at a holiday mission meal keeps our celebrations in perspective. If your kids are small, let them enjoy playing with kids from the mission's neighborhood—this widens their world.

Bring a meal to a house-bound elderly person. You can do this through a program such as Meals-on-Wheels or by adopting a senior citizen in your church as a "grandparent."

Do construction or maintenance outdoor projects. Join a group within your church that's cleaning an elderly person's yard. I found a Habitat for Humanity chapter that let us bring our kids who were then under 16.

Visit a nursing home. Prepare your children by telling them that the facility will have the funny smells of medicines and cleaning products. It will smell of urine because many of the people can't control bodily functions. When they need help with the bathroom, the workers can't get there fast enough. If people moan and reach out to touch them, it's because they like children. Even though they may not understand what's going on, they still need people to love them. Pick out someone to talk to and get on their eye level so they don't have to bend back in the wheelchair. Then introduce yourself and start a conversation that will include your children.

Serving together gives families quality time to spend together. It relieves the guilt parents feel when they're torn between serving others and spending time with family.

How to make family volunteering work. Find activities that are within the capabilities of all family members, especially if that will include preschoolers or grandparents. Or you may want to join another family in a project to make it more fun.

Pray with your children for the people you serve—maybe at meals or bedtime. Demonstrate to them that "being" (praying) and "doing" (serving) go hand in hand.

Look for opportunities that promote relationships. When you visit a nursing home, homeless shelter or soup kitchen, develop friendships.

Service means "doing with" more than "doing for. Serving side-by-side with children helps them gain self-confidence as they see that they can make a difference in this world. In fact, it's difficult to know who is helped more: your kids or the folks to whom they've given their time.

Jan Johnson is a speaker and the author of Growing Compassionate Kids *(Upper Room Books, 2001), www.janjohnson.org.*

Bring back the

by Patricia J. Davis

Children today are exposed to many situations that raise questions and can lead to anxiety. Deteriorating social trends, news from the radio and television and information received from friends prompts them to ask questions. They lose their childhood innocence far too quickly.

Young children often acquire sophisticated tastes and wants. Excess imagery assaults them, pushing them to focus on clothes, personal appearance, games, toys.

Slowing the pace: The rapid pace of change in our society, partly due to technology and globalization, often adversely affects our children. What can parents do? We can begin by slowing down the pace. Living in this fast-paced world is difficult for our little ones. They need free time to enjoy being kids.

According to a study by the University of Michigan, between 1981 and 2001 the amount of free time children had left over after sleeping, eating, studying and participating in organized activities decreased from 40 percent to 25 percent.

Some experts in child psychology believe that depression and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) in children is related to stress from their hectic routines. Quiet time can be a blessing. It allows room for dreaming, imagination and creativity.

In *The Strong Family* (Zondervan, 1994), Charles Swindoll writes, “Scripture clearly states, ‘There is an appointed time for everything.’ How about time to be a child? How about time to grow up slowly, carefully, yes, even protected, and dare I add, a little naive? How about time to ‘speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child?”

We can manage and control the pace of change in the lives of our children and bring back the wonder of childhood.

Being responsible for decisions: In the parent-child relationship, the parent is the one in authority. Don’t give that authority away. Children feel safe and secure when a loving adult takes charge.

Writing in *Parents* magazine, Diana Baumrind of the University of California at Berkeley explains that “authoritative parents (parents who set firm limits but were warm, rational and receptive) were the most likely to have self-reliant, self-controlled and contented children.”

Parents can undermine their authority by giving in too easily. Henry Cloud and John Townsend, authors of *Boundaries with Kids* (Zondervan, 2002), provide this example: “A child may be adopting reactive behavior such as having tantrums. The smiling, happy child turns into a screaming maniac when you, for example, say no to his desire.

“A tantrum doesn’t solve anything. The child needs to use these feelings to move him to action, to address the issue at hand. He should think about his responses and choose the best one available. From a loving, firm position, you can help your child mature his reactive (tantrum) boundaries into love and reality based proactive (responsibility, problem-solving) boundaries.”

By exercising parental authority, we help our children take ownership of their behavior and feelings.

Instructing with Christian values: In today’s world, young children often acquire sophisticated tastes and wants. Excess imagery assaults them constantly, pushing them to focus on clothes, personal appearance, games, toys and so on. Our media-driven culture makes it difficult to direct children toward the spiritual. If parents fail to teach spiritual values to their children, the world will supply them with its values.

Deuteronomy 6:6, 7 says, “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up ...” (NIV)

“We need to think of the home as a training place, not a showplace,” Charles Swindoll says, “The home is a laboratory where experiments are tried out on a daily basis.”

Look for and take the time to use teachable moments. Talk about commonplace things—just as Jesus did with his disciples. Parents also teach by their lifestyle. God has promised to be faithful to us despite the culture around us.

Keeping minds and hearts pure: The Internet, violent computer games, explicit sex and violence in film and television—these powerful forces can corrupt our children and keep them from maintaining a healthy sense of innocence. A Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation study conducted in 2004 revealed that 68 percent of television shows include sexual content—an increase from 56 percent in 1999.

The same foundation conducted a nationwide review of the media habits of children aged 2 through 18. It revealed children spend huge amounts of time in front of a TV or computer screen alone, and nearly one-fourth of school age

wonder of childhood

Appreciate and enjoy this special, sweet, wonderful—and all too brief—time in their lives.

kids watch television more than five hours a day.

Additionally, studies conducted in 2005 show that sexual content and the level of violence in video games are on the rise. The KidsRisk Project from Harvard School of Public Health reveals that video game content descriptors do not always reflect what is in the game concerning the severity of violence and graphic sexual content. As a result, parents cannot make informed decisions.

Do we allow our children to view anything they choose? Some years ago our family decided to discard our television set. (We sold it for $25 and went to dinner on the proceeds.) We have not regretted that decision. My husband and I spend more time now in conversation with our children.

Choosing wholesome activities: According to Christian authors, Ken and Claudia Arp, speakers on Family Workshop, many children watch television because they are bored. They recommend replacing television with productive and intriguing activities that help recapture the imagination of children and improve family time. Consider activities such as board games, family projects, outdoor activities, family dinners and reading for pleasure. Unstructured family time also gives kids an opportunity to enjoy their childhood.

Young children derive pleasure from simple playthings. They enjoy stories, plays, puppet shows and family games. Enhance your child's experience by including mom and dad in these activities. Storytelling distracts them from life's cares. It also develops their imagination, creativity and sense of self.

Visits to the library can be rewarding for young children, as long as parents monitor the activity. Author Sharon Sheppard, in "Keeping Kids Safe in Cyberspace," writes, "Many libraries allow kids to surf the Internet without any restrictions. Kids can stumble across pornography unintentionally—once it is viewed, the scenes may never be erased from their minds."

Some tips for a sense of family unity:

- Have family meals and time for socializing at the table.
- Treasure the "routine" activities at every stage (play, bedtime reading).
- Worship together once a week.
- Pray with your children.
- Promote family affection. (Kids need lots of affection. Establish a close relationship in which kids can feel comfortable talking and know they are being heard.)
- Pursue family fun and foster lifelong enrichment (turn off the television and play with your kids).
- Keep your family traditions alive and make new ones.
- Acquaint your children with their history and heritage.
- Assign chores tailored to the child's age.

The days of childhood pass all too quickly.

My husband says to our young son, "Stop acting like a child!" He responds, "But, Daddy, I am a child." They both laugh.

By being patient when our children behave in an exuberant and noisy manner, we will often rediscover the wonder of childhood, too. As parents, it is our God-given duty and privilege to guide and to guard our little ones through life. We can depend on the promise given to us in Proverbs 22:6: "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (NIV).

We need much wisdom to deal honestly and helpfully with their questions. Let's appreciate and enjoy this special, sweet, wonderful—and all too brief—time in their lives.

Patricia J. Davis is a homemaker and freelance writer living in Philadelphia. She describes herself as "undenominational."

Some resources for families

For the latest Christian movie, TV and game reviews see Christian Spotlight on Entertainment: www.christiananswers.net. (See Kids Explorer)

Wholesome Christian products including Family Choices Board Game: www.christianbook.com (Browse the Kids Page or call 1-800-CHRISTIAN.)

Weekly audio dramas: www.radiotheatre.org

Forgiveness as a conundrum

by Marlin Birkey

The good news of God's forgiveness has me a bit befuddled these days. Not because I have lost sight of the joy of being forgiven. On the contrary, gaining a clearer perspective of my own sinfulness has given me a renewed appreciation and sense of gratitude for God's gracious choice to forgive and cleanse. My befuddlement is due to the mixed message that the Bible seems to give about the nature of forgiveness.

The gospel message has most often connected forgiveness with the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. The reasoning goes like this: All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory; thus all are separated from God by sin. God has provided a way for us to be reconciled to himself through the shed blood of Jesus. God has accepted the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as payment for the sins of all humanity. Forgiveness of sin is extended to all who will accept the sacrifice that Jesus made on their behalf and enter into a relationship of faith and trust in God. In the words of 1 John 2:2, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, "is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."

What causes me to wrinkle my eyebrows, however, is the announcement by Jesus to the paralyzed man in Mark 2:5, "Son, your sins are forgiven," followed in verse 10 by Jesus' declaration to the religious leaders, "I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

On what basis did Jesus announce this forgiveness? The text makes no mention of a temple sacrifice on the paralyzed man's behalf that allowed his forgiveness—nor had Jesus yet gone to the cross to provide an atoning sacrifice. This announced forgiveness seems to have no basis at all. Forgiving the man's sins seems like something Jesus just decided to do, claiming divine authority for his decision.

We have our ways of explaining this away. Since we know that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Hebrews 9:22), some would say that Jesus announced forgiveness on the basis of the sacrifice that would soon be coming, that the cleansing power of Jesus' shed blood would extend both backward and forward.

This explanation may, or may not, be satisfactory. But what if the man were forgiven without any payment for his sins? Would that be possible? And in fact, wouldn't that be closer to the true meaning of forgiveness?

What does it really mean to forgive? Doesn't it mean to release from the obligation to pay? Jesus told the story of a man who owed his creditor a debt that couldn't possibly be paid in his lifetime. Upon his plea for mercy, the creditor forgave the debt, meaning that he did not demand payment. The debtor was unequivocally released from the need to pay. It's not that anyone else paid on his behalf. The creditor simply wiped the debt from his records.

How can we say that God has forgiven our sins when we assert that Jesus has paid for our sins? If our debt has been paid, then it hasn't been forgiven. Moving it to the account of another may constitute a gracious choice that is to our benefit—and for which we can be grateful—but it does not constitute forgiveness.

What if God were free to announce forgiveness based only on a repentant heart? Even this requires a bit of juggling in relation to the story of the paralyzed man because the text makes no mention of him being repentant. The trigger seems to be the faith of the friends who brought him to Jesus. But what if Jesus' announcement of forgiveness was simply an expression of divine compassion, a full and complete recognition of the paralyzed man's inability to pay?

No, we say. God is a just God. Justice demands that sin be paid. To remit a sin without payment would be contrary to God's justice; God would not allow that. But is God enslaved by his own justice?

James 2:13 comments that "mercy triumphs over judgment." Since judgment is based on what is just or unjust, it says to me that mercy triumphs even over justice—that God is free to act only on the basis of his compassion.

Is there an answer to my dilemma? I'm not quite ready to dismiss the notion of sacrificial atonement from my theological understanding of forgiveness. But neither am I willing to limit the scope and depth of God's freedom to announce forgiveness because it doesn't fit my theological system.

If only the Bible were a little more clear!

Marlin Birkey is pastor of Ashton Mennonite Church in Sarasota, Fla.

Barren wasteland, *stunning grace*

by Jonathan P. Larson

A young friend came by to see me last month. She said simply that she wanted someone to pray for her, explaining that her estranged husband, father to her children, who had wandered into a terrible thicket called AIDS, had taken gravely ill and was now at home with his parents.

But his parents, who were church people, having learned about his disgraceful plight, wanted nothing further to do with their son.

My friend explained that she had once made sacred promises to this man. Vows that were being tested now despite folly and estrangement. She had determined she should close her little roadside shop and go care for him in his distress.

"I know," she explained, "that when I get to the village, people will whisper and point. I will find little sympathy or help there. So this is why I need someone to pray for me now. Without that, I'm not sure I will have the strength to do what is required of me."

As I listened to her story, I began to see the full picture—the enormity—of what had happened. Her husband had not only betrayed his vows, but had also, very likely, left her infected by the very virus which now wrought its full fury upon him.

Despite this, she quietly laid down her own paltry living for love of God—if not her nearest neighbor. And for this she sought to know the hands of prayer laid upon her life.

What occurred to me in that moment as she sat quietly with me, her hands gently folded and her head bowed in silent, earnest seeking was, "Woman, you have preached the most powerful sermon I believe I have ever heard. It is you who should pray for me."

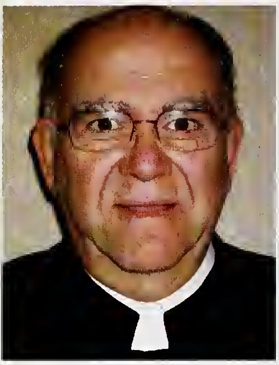
But I did as she bid me. I laid my trembling hands on her head. And I reminded God of the radiant goodness of his humble saints and begged heaven that she should not be abandoned in the majestic thing she set out to do.

It is true that the ground all around us here is littered with the wreckage of unspeakable humiliations and betrayals. But in just such a wasteland, there appeared a stunning grace and dignity to match the worst of it all.

Jonathan P. Larson lives in Gaborone, Botswana.

Stockxpert.com

Peak oil



John Gray is pastor of East Peoria (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

The nightly news is filled with predictions of global warming, climate change, uncontrolled population growth and pandemic disease. But what are the consequences as we begin to run out of cheap oil?

We are faced with a global oil-production peak—the point where the ability to extract oil begins to contract. The United States reached its own oil peak around 1970 with U.S. production in steady decline since then. Today almost two-thirds of the oil that feeds America's voracious appetite is imported.

The availability of cheap oil has accelerated a population shift from rural to urban and suburban areas. With what appeared to be unlimited supplies of cheap energy, farm machinery grew larger and the acreage needed to increase in order to pay for it. Farms got larger and families were displaced.

Oil also fed the "green revolution" by providing pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides. As agricultural production grew, so did the world's population, now at over 6 billion people.

Cheap oil was the source of the growth that took place during most of the 20th century, and it is the primary transportation fuel used throughout the world today. Richard Heinberg, author of *The Party's Over: Oil War and the Fate of Industrial Societies* says, "We don't know exactly when the global peak will happen, but it will almost certainly occur in the early part of this century and possibly as soon as this year." Heinberg said that in 2006.

The major difference between this oil crisis and the oil crises of the 1970's is that this time it will be permanent—which may also exacerbate the consequences of climate change, epidemic disease and overpopulation.

China is now the number two consumer of oil in the world. China's industrialization has made it dependent on oil imports that we in the United States also depend on—perhaps setting the stage for future conflict over control of these resources. As oil depletes, we will be required to downsize, rescale and rethink virtually everything we do. We will be impacted in just about every area of our lives. The cost of using fossil-fueled vehicles will become prohibitive. Clean municipal water may be threatened. Heating and air conditioning, and electric appliances, computers, and entertainment systems will be at risk.

James Howard Kunstler, author of *The Long Emergency* says, "No combinations of alternative fuels will allow us to run American life the way we have been used to running it, or even a substantial fraction of it.

"The wonders of steady technological progress achieved throughout the reign of cheap oil have lulled us into a kind of Jiminy Cricket syndrome, leading many Americans to believe that anything we wish for hard enough will come true. These days, even people who ought to know better are wishing ardently for a seamless transition from fossil fuels to their putative replacements."

I believe the church can and should take a leading position in alerting our communities to the very real consequences inherent in a world without cheap oil. There are many things that can be done to prepare:

The first and most important thing any of us should do is to educate ourselves about the realities and consequences of "peak oil" and then help our families, churches and neighbors understand what we are up against.

Practice community in your church and get to know your neighbors.

Devise strategies for sharing labor, tools and skills within the church and with your neighbors.

Adapt to living a simpler life with fewer creature comforts.

Eat seasonally and locally grown food, and grow as much of your food as possible—perhaps in a community garden at your church.

Take steps to reduce energy use at home (e.g. use compact fluorescent bulbs, replace single pane glazing, choose energy efficient appliances).

Gradually work at reducing your nonessential energy use.

Devote some effort toward food preservation and storage.

Reduce or eliminate debt.

Drive less.

Mennonites have a long history of community, agrarian enterprise, simplicity and service—traits that will serve us well in a time of uncertainty. This history could potentially provide us with the opportunity to return to simpler, healthier and more community. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **It takes more than Sunday school**—Marlene Kropf
- **No more church as usual**—Gerald and Sara Wenger Shenk

MCC launches relief campaign for Iraqis

Will distribute 62,000 blankets, 62,000 school kits, 12,000 newborn kits

Five years after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the humanitarian situation for many people in this country continues to deteriorate. Particularly vulnerable are 2.8 million people who have fled their homes for safer locations within Iraq, says Daryl Byler, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) representative .

"The humanitarian situation of some longer-term internally displaced people is actually worsening," Byler says, "because many are unemployed and have exhausted their savings to cover rent and other expenses."

Many displaced people are hesitant to return to their homes because they do not want to risk facing the same terror that forced them to flee.

"Although the security situation has improved somewhat," Byler says, "these improvements are fragile and the security situation is still incredibly volatile."

In response to requests from three long-term partner organizations, MCC is launching a $2 million material resource response. Shipments of 20,000 relief kits, 62,000 blankets, 62,000 school kits, 12,000 newborn kits and 5,500 sewing kits will be distributed over a six-month period in 11 of the 18 governances in Iraq.

MCC warehouses in Canada and the United States have fairly large supplies of blankets and school kits but there is an urgent need for relief kits and heavy blankets, says David Martin, MCC Material resources coordinator .

Relief kits contain soap, shampoo, toothpaste, bandages, laundry detergent, bath towels and personal items. A $10 donation with each kit will help cover the costs of purchasing new buckets for the relief kits, transportation costs and some of the distribution costs, says Martin. Cash contributions are also being accepted for this project. More information is available at mcc.org/iraqrelief.

In an effort to distribute blankets before the winter months, the first five or six containers of material resources will be sent in August and the remaining shipment of 15 more containers will be sent to Iraq by the end of the year, says Martin.

Distribution of these resources is being organized and coordinated by REACH, an MCC partner organization based in northern Iraq, and by Iraqi Al-Amal and Iraqi Youth League, two long-term MCC partner organizations based in Baghdad. All three organizations have distributed material resources in previous years, says Cindy Byler, MCC representative.

Representatives from each organization have participated in MCC-sponsored peacebuilding training programs and are designing distribution plans that promote peacebuilding activities, in cooperation with local governments and groups.

Melissa Engle

Ahmad Khaleel Saeed's family was among 148 families that received MCC relief kits and blankets in the Bahrka district in northern Iraq last year.

These plans will help the most vulnerable people in each community where material resources will be distributed. This includes displaced people who have found refuge in a new community, displaced people who have returned to their homes and poor people living in these communities.

"This is a new way of working together," she says, adding that this collaborative approach brings together people from different ethnic and religious groups.

Agencies monitoring the situation of displaced people within Iraq report that people are slowly returning to their home communities, says Byler, mostly in Baghdad. But often as soon as they leave, newly displaced families from other regions of Iraq arrive.

"Some families return to their homes and find that they have been destroyed or looted," he says. "They leave one family member to stand guard and the rest return to their area of displacement."

About 70 percent of the homes vacated by displaced people are occupied by other families or damaged. These homes are generally located in communities that were mixed religious and ethnic communities before 2003. Many of these communities are now homogenous communities.

About 2 million Iraqis have found temporary refuge in other countries, mainly Syria and Jordan, but live in fear of deportation. When they return to Iraq most of them face the same realities as returnees who had found refuge in safer areas within the country.

Cindy and Daryl Byler are MCC representatives for Iran, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine based in Amman, Jordan.—*Gladys Terichow of MCC*

The humanitarian situation … is actually worsening. —J. Daryl Byler

Racial/ethnic leaders assess Mennonite Church USA's efforts to dismantle racism

Dismantling racism in the church was one of four main priorities established by Mennonite Church USA delegates when the denomination was formed in 2001. Anna Groff asked Iris de León-Hartshorn, Mennonite Church USA's director of intercultural relations, to suggest the leaders who could evaluate progress. Here are their assessments of Mennonite Church USA's progress toward this goal.—*Editor*

Michelle Armster
Co-director, office on justice and peacebuilding
Mennonite Central Committee

I would really like to see the church bust a move on what it means to be Anabaptist.
—Michelle Armster

Michelle Armster says antiracism in the church is complex, as it is in many institutions.

"There are ways in which the church is further along," she says, "ways in which the church is the same and ways in which the church has backslid."

She names a way she has seen the church move forward: Those in leadership have tried to "understand, struggle with, embrace and have conversations around the issue of race and racism in the church."

However, Armster says the church has the same "ambiance"—or general feeling or mood—as it did many years. For example, conference gatherings follow the same formula they did prior to 2002. She believes nostalgia is part of the reason the "ambiance" is not changing. Also, the ethnic, white Mennonites have the familial connection that continue to be present.

For Armster, Anabaptist theology is attractive to her because it came from the margins.

"I would really like to see the church bust a move on what it means to be Anabaptist," she says.

She says the understanding of Anabaptist is often different between the ethnic, white Mennonites and underrepresented racial/ethnic Mennonites. She describes Anabaptism as an elephant in a room touched by six blind people, each person holding a different part of the elephant.

"The church has backslid, rather than moving forward and really walking through the fire of change," she says. "It's backslid to the comfortable, the nostalgia."

Armster believes the church stunts change by thinking it is something it is not. "[The church] acts as a mainline Protestant church rather than the radicals of the Reformation," she says. "We are not as different as we think we are."

Juanita Nunez, moderator-elect
Iglesia Menonita Hispana

Juanita Nunez says the church is coming closer to its goal of antiracism set six years ago by intentionally addressing it.

"We are talking more about it also," she says. "I remember for a long time people didn't talk about it."

An example of improvement is translations for the Spanish-speaking community.

"That is important to us so that people know what is happening and so we have the opportunity to read it in our own language," she says. "Sometimes the Hispanic community feels so far away from everything.

"We have also seen Hispanic people in positions that are significant in the Mennonite church," she says, naming recent appointees such as Gilberto Flores, denominational minister, Rafael Barahona, associate director of Mennonite Education Agency, and Samuel Lopez, Executive Board member.

Education is very important, Nunez says. Universities, colleges, seminaries need to teach about antiracism because those students are future leaders that will set visions for their congregations and agencies, she adds.

These improvements are hopeful, although we know that we still have a long way to go, she says.

"It's an ugly issue but at the same time we have to address it," she says.

Kuaying Teng,
Minister of Asian ministries
Mennonite Mission Network

Compared to the past four to five years, the denominational goal of antiracism has improved, says Kuaying Teng.

"It is improving," Teng says. "I see the change,"—adding that he speaks from his perspective of the church and work with Mennonite Mission Network. Underrepresented racial/ethnic people have power and are making decisions, he says. However, he hears requests that this happen even more. Nonracial/ethnic people have more information about what is happen-

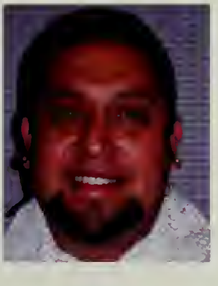
Anti-racism goal was one of four goals adopted by the new denomination in 2001; current Six Year Review is opportunity to check progress churchwide.

ing in congregations of underrepresented racial/ethnic members, which is important when working toward the goal, says Teng. He also appreciates the effort and energy the church has put into urban ministry that includes antiracism in that context. Mennonite Church USA provides financial support, along with conferences, to church-planting and new racial/ethnic congregations.

His hope for the future is a strong partnership between Mennonite Church USA and racial/ethnic congregations to work and serve internationally.

"Sometimes racial/ethnic people feel isolated," he says.

Hugo Saucedo
Western District/South Central Conference youth pastor



"In the past six years, Mennonite Church USA has made some good strides in becoming an antiracist organization," Hugo Saucedo says. "Many of its organizations and constituents have willingly chosen to be stretched through Damascus Road trainings and learned how they can better understand the impact of racism. However, in this climate of xenophobia that our country is currently experiencing, I have seen backslide in the Mennonite church. Many of our Latin American undocumented brothers and sisters are experiencing discrimination and persecution by the U.S. Government.

"Mennonite Church USA has an opportunity to do more than what it is currently doing. For example, we can petition local, state and federal government agencies to petition for immigration reform. As individuals, we can also choose to welcome our undocumented brothers and sisters into our churches and our homes.

"Although Mennonite Church USA is addressing issues like immigration with various types of support and by equipping its Latin American leaders through publications written in their language and through trainings conducted in their own language, it is all for naught if those leaders are not welcomed in this country.

"To bring more awareness to this issue, Mennonite Church USA should do a better job at including more people of color within its power structure.

"This includes its various boards and its agencies. Although there is much work to be done, I strongly believe that Mennonite Church USA will step up to the challenge. And thus, doing so, will challenge us as constituents to follow suite."

Olivette McGhee, president
Native Mennonite Ministries

Olivette McGhee says Mennonite Church USA is not losing ground on the issue of antiracism because the denomination continues to work at it.

"I don't feel like it's getting any worse," she says. McGhee notes that according to Conrad Kanagy's 2006 Church Member Profile, racial/ethnic congregations are the fastest growing in Mennonite Church USA. "I don't believe that would be possible if we would not have felt the support of the church."

However, she says this work will be ongoing and "it's not going to go away" after the first six years of the denomination.

"People have made a conscious effort to keep it out there in the forefront," McGhee says, adding that it is often discussed at denominational meetings. McGhee says she was assured during the conference call about the denomination's proposed structural changes that racial/ethnic leaders will have a presence on the final board.

"I believe they are trying to include us in everything they do," she says. However, the financial piece remains an issue—although it has been discussed for years, according to McGhee.

McGhee says she hopes that underrepresented racial/ethnic members might get a "bigger piece of the pie," since their numbers are increasing.

People on the margins, like Native Mennonites, have not seen financial improvement despite Mennonite Church USA's First Fruits giving plan, she says. Native Mennonite Ministries, that receives $8,000 per year, has been "having to work with that little for years," she says. "[But] I know other parts of the church are hurting too."—*Anna Groff*

Mennonite Church USA should do a better job at including more people of color within its power structure.—Hugo Saucedo

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

Youth give San José check to academy

Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church group wins Bethel College contest.

Youth Group Service Project
BETHEL COLLEGE
BETHEL COLLEGE

Dave Linscheid

Youth Group Service Project

Erica Cheslock

TOP: Janelle Dean, left, Harrisonburg, Va., and Mandy Kanagy, Timberville, Va., find their names on the San José 2007 banner. CENTER: Richard Ollinger, right, president of Cornerstone Christian Academy in Philadelphia, receives a check from Dave Linscheid of Bethel College. Academy children and the Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church youth group pose for the presentation.

Last year, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., was completing a successful experiment at the Mennonite Youth Convention in San José, Calif. Instead of spending money on promotional items, staff from Bethel's admissions, alumni and church relations offices, who co-sponsored the college's booth in the youth convention display area, decided to emphasize service.

Each day for four days, the young people who stopped by Bethel's booth were invited to leave tickets in a tumbler. Bethel then donated a dollar—money that would otherwise have gone toward buying giveaway items—for every ticket, up to $1,000 a day. The total was then divided among three service agencies from the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference regional area, and one youth group that got to choose its charity. The youth also signed canvas banners to be given to each of the organizations.

Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church's youth group won the fourth-day drawing at the youth convention. They chose to give the money to Cornerstone Christian Academy in Philadelphia, the location of their summer service trip this year.

On July 11, Dave Linscheid, Bethel's director of alumni relations, visited Cornerstone to deliver the last "San José" check. Other recipients of checks from the San José fund-raiser were Goldensun Peace Ministries, Glendale, Ariz.; Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi Village, Ariz.; and LA Urban Corps, Los Angeles.

Cornerstone Christian Academy began after the 1980 Philadelphia teachers' strike—and subsequent distress in Philadelphia schools—when attorney James Sweet and evangelist Tony Campolo began investing themselves in the lives of children in southwest Philadelphia. The school began in 1988 with 40 children in grades K-3. Located in the heart of southwest Philadelphia, it has grown to 230 students in grades K-8.

Cornerstone is one of several mission programs and ministries to which Harrisonburg Mennonite Church has a long-term connection.

"They serve at these institutions on a rotating basis," says Linscheid, "rather than doing one-time service that doesn't allow relationships to build."

The group of youth and sponsors, organized by youth pastor Peter Eberly, did volunteer work at Cornerstone July 10-15.—*Melanie Zuercher of Bethel College*

TheMennonite

Reading someone else's copy?

It's easy to subscribe online at **www.themennonite.org** or by calling **1-800-790-2498.**
TheMennonite

Pastors Day planned for Columbus 2009

Darrell Guder, Lois Barrett scheduled speakers for first-ever pastor event.

Pastors Day will kick off the Mennonite Church USA convention in Columbus, Ohio, on June 30, 2009. This is the denomination's first biennial convention to devote an entire day to resource pastors, says Gilberto Flores, director of denominational ministry and missional church for Mennonite Church USA.

The theme for the event is "Pastors as Missional Leaders." Programming will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., June 30, 2009. Darrell Guder, Lois Barrett and Jim Schrag are scheduled presenters. The day will include plenary sessions and small group discussions.

Guder is a key leader in the missional church movement. He is professor of the theology of mission and ecumenics and dean of academic affairs at Princeton (N.J.) Theological Seminary.

Barrett of Wichita, Kan., will give leadership to small group discussions. She is director and associate professor of theology and Anabaptist studies of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary — Great Plains Extension.

Schrag, executive director of Mennonite Church USA, will speak on the pastor's role in the denomination.

"Pastors work hard and sometimes feel very isolated," Flores says. "Giving a whole day to this event will help pastors recognize … their importance to the denomination. If pastors are not leading the local congregations into a missional imagination, it may be difficult for the congregations to move forward. Pastors are key people for the church."

The event will create a common table for pastors during the convention week.

"We expect that pastors will engage each other and share about their own congregations," Flores says, "imagining together about the missional church and the future of our denomination as a missional denomination.

"At this convention," Flores says, "we can be in a peers meeting—not only enjoying our time with others, but building our dreams together about what God is calling us to do."

Flores will lead all sessions.—*June Galle Krehbiel for Mennonite Church USA*

Pastors work hard and sometimes feel very isolated. —Gilberto Flores

60 discuss 'old' and 'new' Anabaptists

Myers, Enns and Roth address interchurch relations consultation July 1-3.

Sixty people from across Mennonite Church USA met July 1-3 in Akron, Pa., as part of a consultation focused on the theme "Connecting with 'old' and 'new' Anabaptists." Ched Myers, Elaine Enns and John D. Roth were presenters.

The event focused on this theme and on how Mennonite Church USA relates to Christians of other traditions. Participants included pastors, area conference leaders, denominational leaders, seminary professors and theologians and service and mission agency staff. The consultation was sponsored by Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership and was the third such consultation since 2004.

Myers describes himself as part of the "first wave of Anabaptist viral infection" of the broader Christian church. Coming to faith through the Jesus movement, he became part of a network of intentional communities inspired by the writings of John Howard Yoder and other Anabaptists.

"I found a theological home," Myers said, "if not a hearth to warm myself by."

Myers and his wife, Elaine Enns, encouraged Mennonite Church USA to build relationships with "new" Anabaptists today. Myers travels widely in a ministry of teaching, writing and organizing to strengthen Biblical literacy and radical discipleship.

Enns highlighted a variety of Christian communities and networks whose life is focused on discipleship and following Jesus. Some in this "second wave" of discipleship communities are quite isolated and feel like refugees from the church.

"Set the table," Myers suggested, "and invite these folks to talk to each other and to you about their discipleship experience."

Roth, a Goshen (Ind.) College professor of history, spoke to the group about facing its own history of division and working for healing of relationships within the Anabaptist family. He suggested three guidelines for these encounters: telling our story as confession rather than judgment, extending a vulnerable hospitality and practicing radical patience.

André Gingerich Stoner, director of interchurch relations for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, presented a staff report on ongoing interchurch initiatives. Major attention during the past years involved processing membership in Christian Churches Together.—*Mennonite Church USA Staff*

I found a theological home, if not a hearth to warm myself by.—Ched Myers

Iraqi finds refuge among Mennonites

Professor in Iraq—kidnapped and tortured—now seeks asylum in Canada.

Courtesy photo

Osama Al-Salami at a World Refugee Day 2008 celebration

In Iraq, Osama Al-Salami was a nationally known professor at Sulaimani University, a respected periodontist with a private practice, husband to a successful lawyer and father. But after living through the first Gulf War and the second American-led invasion of Iraq, Al-Salami left his home in Baghdad to seek education and asylum in Washington, D.C.

In the process, Al-Salami found a home with members of the Washington Mennonite community.

His journey has been long, and the wars in Iraq have cost him much.

Osama taught us how far-reaching the horrors of this war are.—Wilbur Yoder

Al-Salami has been kidnapped, detained and tortured multiple times. In 2005, he lost his wife, Asmaa, and his son, Ahmed, in an al-Qaeda bombing. Along with more than 100 Iraqi professors, he was kidnapped by the Iraqi police in November 2006 and later was captured by Shiite fundamentalists who mistook him to be a Sunni.

Last September, Al-Salami fled Iraq and gave a sworn testimony in Geneva, Switzerland, where he registered as an asylum-seeker. In December he came to the United States on a tourist visa, having been invited to speak at several periodontics conferences.

Al-Salami arrived on foot at the Washington Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on Dec. 11, 2007, seeking help. His case landed with Amelia Brandt, Mennonite Voluntary Service participant.

Brandt, a member of First Mennonite Church in Hillsboro, Kan., serves as a protection counselor at UNHCR and works with walk-in clients. When they met, Brandt could tell that Al-Salami was upset. After hearing bits and pieces of Al-Salami's story, Brandt set to work finding a place for him to stay that evening.

The shelters she called were not specialized for refugees.

"I didn't feel comfortable with that because he was very vulnerable," says Brandt.

After many calls and referrals yielded no result, a college friend referred Brandt to the International Guest House in Washington D.C.

The International Guest House, sponsored by Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church and Allegheny Mennonite Conference, is a welcoming place for international and U.S.-based visitors to Washington. When Brandt called house hosts Wilbur and Helen Yoder and shared Al-Salami's story, they gladly opened their doors to him for the night.

Although the guest house is usually intended for short-term stays only, Al-Salami was able to remain there through March 18.

Slowly, Al-Salami has begun to share his story with those with whom he has come into contact, although it is certainly difficult to relive and retell. Local columnist and professor Colman McCarthy, director of the Center for Teaching Peace in Washington, invited Al-Salami to speak with several college classes.

Al-Salami has not achieved asylum status but is working with a *pro bono* attorney to win a student visa. Because of the psychological pressure of living in the United States, a country at war with his own, Al-Salami recently moved to Canada to continue his studies and work to gain asylum.

But Al-Salami has made connections within the Washington Mennonite community that will remain for many years to come.

"I greatly appreciate the Mennonite church," says Al-Salami, "Really, it is in my heart deeply. The Mennonite church is a great peaceful, church. Do not hesitate to contact me for every effort for peace, love and help to all."

Al-Salami's story has left an indelible impact on Brandt and those he encountered at the International Guest House.

"Osama became more than a guest," says Wilbur Yoder. "He became a friend and someone we learned to know very well. He taught us how far-reaching the horrors of this war are."

Al-Salami's story has been publicized in "One Man's Tale of War," by Colman McCarthy, in the *National Catholic Reporter.—Hannah Heinzekehr of Mennonite Mission Network*

Mennonite Church is official in Vietnam

6,000 in Mennonite congregations; house churches seek Mennonite affiliation

There wasn't much of a job description for Gerry and Donna Keener when they headed off to Vietnam in 1997. "Just go and be a presence," Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) administrators advised.

Today, more than a decade later, the leadership training door has opened—since the government of Vietnam recognized the Vietnam Mennonite Church in October 2007, granting them official permission to operate nationally and establish a ministry training center.

EMM workers first entered Vietnam in 1957, and by the time the last EMM workers left in 1975 following the change in government in Saigon, a core group of 150 Mennonites were established.

But for the next 15 years the Vietnam Mennonite Church lay dormant, hidden behind a cloak of silence and new political realities.

Then in 1988, Nguyen Quang Trung reported that there were 200 Mennonite members from 30 families who had maintained their Mennonite identity while worshiping with the remaining "open" (but not yet officially recognized) Baptist and Tin Lanh Churches.

Two years later, former Saigon Mennonite church pastor Tran Xuan Quang, who'd been attending a church conference in the United States in 1975 when the city came under the new government's control, visited his homeland and was thrilled to connect with his former flock after 15 years of silence.

Now led by Pastor Trung, the Vietnamese Mennonites requested someone who could work among them and help build bridges between them and the worldwide Mennonite community.

Luke Martin, a former EMM worker in Vietnam, traveled back for a visit in 1995, and shared copies of the 1995 *Mennonite Confession of Faith* which had been translated into Vietnamese by North American Vietnamese Mennonite leaders.

Pastor Trung and others in the small Mennonite group lost no opportunity to share the Mennonite confession with leaders of the burgeoning house church movement as well as with the Bureau of Religious Affairs.

Keener, who arrived with his family in 1997, says, "The *Mennonite Confession of Faith* came right at a time the 'unofficial' house churches were seeking broader global affiliation with a recognized group with a good reputation."

One house church pastor told Keener, "It is very simple, and also deals with ethics, not just correct theological beliefs."

Keener, who had worked in Vietnam for World Relief from 1973-75, already had a basic grasp of the language and was hoping to become involved in leadership development. As thousands of Christians embraced "Mennonite" as their point of identification with the wider Christian world, Keener, Trung and visiting Vietnamese Mennonites from North America helped coordinate several trainings for pastors—but always with a cautious eye toward the government.

For more than a decade Pastor Trung continued his efforts to legally register the Mennonite church with the government, educating the government on who the Mennonites are.

In 1997 when a typhoon hit the southern coast of Vietnam, swamping homes and villages, Trung spearheaded a relief effort in the name of the "unofficial" Mennonite church.

When questioned about why the Mennonites couldn't just be part of the "open" Tin Lanh (Protestant) church Trung would say, "Mennonites worship God and do social work."

The efforts paid off. Authorities took favorable notice of this and other relief work in which Vietnamese Mennonites provided humanitarian aid with funds provided by EMM and Mennonite Central Committee.

Now that the church has obtained official recognition, Keener says numerous house churches have been affiliating with the Mennonites. The number of Mennonites in registered congregations is about 6,000, but thousands more carry a Mennonite identity. During the past year the Vietnam Mennonite Church has organized into six districts and hopes to build at least one legal church building in each district. Most congregations continue to meet in homes.—*Jewel Showalter of Eastern Mennonite Missions*

Two young Vietnamese Mennonite women share a choreographed song for the worship service attended by the Vietnam government's Committee of Religious Affairs during the Vietnam Mennonite Church's celebration of its official recognition.

HỘI THÁNH MENNONITE
LỄ ĐÓN NH
ẤY CHỨNG NHẬN ĐĂNG KÝ HOẠT ĐỘNG T
ENNONITE VIỆT NAM DO BAN TÔN GIÁO C
úc 9h00 Ngày 02/1
Sư Nguyễn Quang
rưởng Lt. Tổng
TÔN GIÁO CHÍNH PHỦ
Chúc Mừng
HỘI THÁNH MENNONITE VIỆT NAM

Gerry Keener

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

CALENDAR

The Mennonite Children's Choir of Lancaster (MCCL) is currently ***auditioning singers entering grades 2-12 for the 2008-09 season***. Choirs include: Preparatory Choir, grades 2-5; Concert Choir, grades 6-8; and Chamber Choir, grades 9-12. To audition for the Preparatory or Concert choirs, please contact Darlene Hein at 717-98-0398 or dtmhein@aol.com. For the Chamber Choir, please contact Rosemary Siegrist Blessing at 717-606-3272 or siegrirs@hotmail.com.

WORKERS

Hoober, Kristen, ended a term as pastor at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on July 3.

Yoder, Amanda, ended a term as associate pastor at First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, on June 30.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Burkholder, Carter Vu, July 5, to Dan and Amy Martin Burkholder, Lancaster, Pa.

Kaminkow, Macy Grace, July 15, to Tim and Jamie Goering Kaminkow, Newton, Kan.

Krahn, Sophia Marie, July 16, to Brian and Stacy Haines Krahn, Mishawaka, Ind.

Meza, Emelia Kay, June 16, to Eduardo Meza and Elizabeth Bender, Hesston, Kan.

Miller, Alea Gabriela, Arianna Grace and Armando Neil (triplets), April 12, to Matthew and Digna Taveras Miller, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Mishler, Brianna Nicole, July 18, to David and Stacy Miller Mishler, Millersburg, Ohio.

Osborn, Cade Logan, July 8, to Justin and Danae Wiens Osborn, Buhler, Kan.

Slagel, Gavin Robert, June 28, to Matt and Jennifer Diers Slagel, Olds, Iowa.

Swartzendruber, Emily Paige, July 4, to Calvin and Karen LeFevre Swartzendruber, Goshen, Ind.

Swartzendruber, Isaac Nathaniel, July 2, to Anthony and Kara Dixon Swartzendruber, Wichita, Kan.

Zerger, Ashlyn Ann, July 10, to Neil and Ginny Stohs Zerger, Wichita, Kan.

MARRIAGES

Blemano/Tetteh: Augustene Tetteh Blemano, Old Nigo, Eastern Region, Ghana, and Dianah Tetteh, Somanya, Eastern Region, Ghana, June 10, at Trom-Somanya, Somanya, Ghana.

Brubacher/Weber: Heidi Brubacher, St. Jacobs, Ontario, and Tavis Weber, Listowel, Ontario, June 28, in St. Jacobs.

Chotos/Krahn: David Chotos, Edmonton, Alberta, and Natasha Krahn, Edmonton, June 19, at Waterloo North Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ontario.

Culp/Paetkau: Gregory Culp, Richmond Hill, Ontario, and Andrea Paetkau, Waterloo, Ontario, June 28, in Stoney Creek, Ontario.

Eriksen/Kaufman: Steven Eriksen, Ind., and Beth Kauf,am, Marion, S.D., June 21, at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Kauffman/Unruh: Joel Kauffman, Hesston, Kan., and Ariana Unruh, Hesston, July 5, at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Kaufmann/Unruh: Maurice Kaufmann, Bluffton, Ohio, and Ellie Unruh, Marion, S.D., June 7, at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Mast/Roth: Gerald Mast, Bluffton, Ohio, and Carrie Roth, Bluffton, June 1, at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Shantz/Willard: Lorrie Shantz, Waterloo, Ontario, and Ross Willard, Waterloo, June 7, in Kitchener, Ontario.

DEATHS

Aeschliman, Viola Sauder, 94, Wauseon, Ohio, died July 16. Spouse: Omar Aeschliman (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Katie Nofziger Sauder. Children: Donald, Mary Gibson, Joyce Shehorn; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandson. Funeral: July 19 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Albrecht, Alfred J., 84, Goshen, Ind., died June 23. Spouse: Miriam M. Sutter Albrecht. Parents: Aaron and Kathryn Hooley Albrecht. Children: Trish Yoder, James; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 26 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Borntreger, Emma F. Frey Miller, 87, Burton, Ohio, and Apple Creek, Ohio, died July 9 following a brief illness. Spouse: Adam Borntreger (deceased). Spouse: Andrew Miller (deceased). Parents: Samuel B. and Dinah Kurtz Frey. Children: Betty Weber, Edna Faye Miller, Robert E. Miller, Bertha Gingerich, Basil Borntreger; two grandchildren; numerous step-grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 12 at Longenecker Mennonite Church, Dundee, Ohio.

Britsch, Irene M. Wyse, 93, Archbold, Ohio, died May 31 of colitis as a consequence of clostridium difficile. Spouse: Olen L. Britsch (deceased). Parents: William M. and Dinah J. Roth Wyse. Children: Maretta Buller, Calvin; five grandchildren. Memorial service: June 3 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Brubacher, Richard A., 84, Kalona, Iowa, died July 4. Spouse: Maria Willer Brubacher. Parents: Alfred and Adek Orth Brubacher. Funeral: July 8 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Fast, Erma Justina, 95, Hesston, Kan., died June 23. Parents: David H. and Justina Warkentin Fast. Funeral: July 12 at Schowalter Villa Chapel, Hesston.

Gochnauer, Harold B., 94, Lancaster, Pa., died June 9. Spouse: Belle C. Hamsher Gochnauer (deceased). Parents: Adam H. and Myrtle Bair Gochnauer. Foster child: Gertrude Henry; two foster-grandchildren. Funeral: June 13 at Gundel Funeral Home, Lancaster.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business.

Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

timely tip:
Check your smoke alarms!

Gochnauer, Viola Martin Shenk, 91, Lititz, Pa., died July 3. Spouse: Henry B. Gochnauer (deceased). Spouse: Adam M. Shenk (deceased). Parents: Mahlon W. and Elsie V. Harnish Martin. Children: Shirley A. King, Nancy L. Shenk, Jay D. Shenk, John C. Shenk; eight grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 9 at East Petersburg Mennonite Church, East Petersburg, Pa.

Heatwole, Dorothy Frances Suter, 90, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 9. Spouse: Roy A. Heatwole. Parents: Lawrence Emanuel and Emma Pearl Showalter Suter. Children: Peggy H. Landis, James D.; four grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 11 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Herschberger, Cora Kauffman, 88, Humboldt, Ill., died June 17. Spouse: Menno J. Herschberger (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Fannie Miller Kauffman. Children: Fannie Miller, Raymond, Larry, Virgil, Dorothy Nichols, Betty Dodson; 14 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; six step-grandchildren; nine step-great-grandchildren; one step-great-great-grandchild. Funeral: June 20 at Arthur Mennonite Church, Arthur, Ill.

Hilty, Edna Nussbuam, 91, Dalton, Ohio, died April 3. Spouse: Paul Joseph Hilty (deceased). Parents: Sam E. and Lina Amstutz Nussbuam. Children: Kenneth, Emma Jean Yoder, Christine Welfley, Alice Metcalf, Leon; 17 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 6 at Sonnenburg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Keim, Albert N., 72, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 27 of complications following a liver transplant. Spouse: Kathy Fisher Keim. Parents: Noah and Sarah Miller Keim. Child: Melody Keim; two grandchildren. Funeral: July 1 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Miller, Eli Lewis, Sr., 80, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 7. Spouse: Ruth Brubaker Hess Miller. Parents: Fred E. and Matilda Beachy Miller. Children: Jim, Phil, John, E. Lewis Jr., Jean Oswald, Louise Heintz, Marie Headings, Barb Hunt, Becky Martin; 17 grandchildren. Funeral: July 13 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Overholt, Mabel Frances Hostetler, 95, West Liberty, Ohio, died June 23. Spouse: Clarence Overholt (deceased). Parents: George M. and Mary Smucker Hostetler. Children: Irene Kauffman, John, Lois Overholt, Ann Mellott, Emily Overholt, Galen, Fred; nine grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 27 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Schantz, Esther M. Longacre, 100, Souderton, Pa., died July 4. Spouse: Erwin M. Schantz (deceased). Parents: Henry W. and Mary Alice Roth Longacre. Children: Mary Alice Conrad, Daniel; six grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 8 at Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Schrag, Ada Gering, 90, Freeman, S.D., died July 5. Spouse: Paul Schrag. Parents: Joe D. and Caroline Gering. Children: Judy Rechnagel, Mary Tecklenburg, Doug; seven grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 9 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Tice, Ida Cressman, 94, Telford, Pa., died July 6. Spouse: George Tice, Jr. (deceased). Parents: Frank W. and Adda Alderfer Cressman. Child: Gail Schilling; one grandchild. Funeral: July 10 at Blooming Glen Mennonite Church, Blooming Glen, Pa.

Troyer, Martha Wenger, 92, Goshen Ind., died July 6. Spouse: Raymond Troyer. Parents: Noah and Susannah Loucks Wenger. Children: JoAnn Garber, Emmett, Richard, Franklin, Jerry, Warren; 18 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 10 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

- •Editor@TheMennonite.org
- •fax 574-535-6050
- •1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

betransformed

"There is something special about reading a biblical story while standing at the location where it happened. For the rest of my life, I will read the Bible differently."

Karissa Sauder, a member of EMU's cross-cultural group in the Middle East, spring '08.

Student baptism in the Jordan River

Read cross-cultural journals and learn about future programs...
emu.edu/crosscultural

800-368-2665 • admiss@emu.edu

EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

Is God calling you to use your leadership, management skills and experiences to serve others through **Mennonite Central Committee** (MCC)? ***Leaders urgently needed for MCC programs.*** Please visit MCC's Web site at mcc.org/serve to read complete job descriptions. Contact Becky Stahly at 717-859-1151 or rss@mcc.org if you are interested in any of the following leadership positions.

Africa: MCC Representative for Democratic Republic of Congo, Kinshasa (09/08); Associate Director for Central/West Africa, Abuja, Nigeria (available now); Coordinator—MCC Regional Peace Network (East Africa), Kampala, Uganda or Nairobi, Kenya (available now).

Europe/Middle East: MCC Representative for the Former Soviet Union, Zaporozhye, Ukraine (06/09); MCC Representative for Lebanon/Syria, Beirut (06/09).

Latin America: MCC Representative for Brazil, Recife (08/09); MCC Representative for Haiti, Port-au-Prince (available now); Associate Director for South America, likely in Curitiba, Brazil (01/09).

International program: Director of Program Development, Akron, Pa., or Winnipeg, Manitoba. Key responsibilities include supervision and direction to International Program Department's program development and strategic planning process (11/08).

Lebanon Mennonite Church (Oregon) located in the scenic Pacific Northwest is seeking a ***full-time associate pastor*** to help with youth and music programs. If interested, please contact us at kauffmanjb@netzero.com, or mail resumé to LMC, PO Box 575, Lebanon, OR 97355, or call 541-258-5789 or 541-409-3336.

Human resources director: **Fairmount Homes**, a faith-based 300-unit CCRC located in a beautiful country setting near Ephrata, Pa., is seeking a manager to oversee all aspects of the human resources program. Minimum requirements: bachelor's degree in human resources/organizational development or related field of management. Previous supervisory experience in a retirement community preferred. Fax 717-354-1844 or mail to 333 Wheat Ridge Dr., Ephrata, PA 17522.

Chief financial officer: **Ten Thousand Villages**, a nonprofit, Fair Trade retail organization based in Akron, Pa., seeks a strategic leader with sound technical skills, analytical ability, good judgment and strong operational focus to oversee all financial and fiscal management aspects of Ten Thousand Villages operations. Through a team leadership approach, the CFO will ensure coordination in the administrative, business planning, accounting and budgeting efforts of the company. Responsibilities also include supervision of accounting, warehouse and IT departments. As a member of senior management, the CFO participates in overall vision and policy decision making. Full job description is available at www.tenthousandvillages.com/employment. Submit resumé to beth.parson@tenthousandvillages.com or fax 717-859-2622.

Ridgeview Mennonite Church, an MCUSA/Atlantic Coast Conference congregation located in Intercourse, Pa., is searching for a ***one-half to full-time person to serve as a pastoral team member*** focusing in youth and young adult ministry. For more information and a ministry description, please contact Ridgeview Mennonite Church at ridgeviewchurch@frontiernet.net or call 717-768-3143.

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2008 TOURS

CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)
TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)
FOLLOWING the STEPS of MOSES (November 2-14)

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (January 3-13)
CHURCHES AND SAFARIS in KENYA and TANZANIA (February 9-20)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 4-17)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (June 5-19)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-19)
MWC #1 / #3 / #4 / #6 - SOLD OUT
MWC #2 - CHILE, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY (July 5-20) A Few Seats
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and BOLIVIA (July 12-25)
MWC #7 - PARAGUAY and IGUAZU FALLS (July 8-20)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (July 31-August 13)
MENNONITE STORY in POLAND (September 15-23)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (October 24-November 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2010 TOURS

AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 5-25)
WITH OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY:
SPRINGTIME in HOLLAND, BELGIUM & GERMANY (May 6-17)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 1-14)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA & ITS FJORDS (June 13-28)
PENNSYLVANIA to EUROPE (June 19-July 2)
ISRAEL/PALESTINE (June 24-July 5)
SEE WEB SITE FOR MORE TOURS TO OBERAMMERGAU

TOURMAGINATION
DISCOVERY & FELLOWSHIP

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

New from Cascadia, copublished Herald Press

A Usable Past? A Story of Living and Thinking Vocationally at the Margins, Paul Peachey. "Born in an Amish home, Peachey has covered a wide cultural and spiritual terrain. His story entertains, informs, and offers a unique interpretation of how God acts in history." —*Calvin Redekop.* 256 p; $16.95

The Work of Jesus Christ in Anabaptist Perspective: Essays in Honor of J. Denny Weaver, ed. Alain Epp Weaver and Gerald J. Mast. "Finally, an entire book engaging Weaver's significant and creative contribution to anti-violent atonement theory!" —*Sharon L. Baker.* 430 p; $26.95

Stumbling Toward a Genuine Conversation on Homosexuality, ed. Michael A. King. "The beauty of this volume is that all of my doubts, questions, and struggles are found within its pages. . . ." —*Kevin Moore, reviewing in* MB Herald. 312 p; $22.95 (not copublished Herald Press)

Cascadia

www.CascadiaPublishingHouse.com
contact@cascadiapublishinghouse.com
Herald Press: 1-800-245-7894

Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, PA., seeks a ***half-time youth pastor*** to provide vision and programs for youth to experience God's love and grace. Strong relational skills, good emotional intelligence, passion for youth, a college education, and commitment to an Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective are desired. The congregation is open to a full-time associate pastor with responsibilities in addition to youth pastor. Contact Miriam Book, Lead Pastor, bookm@salfordmc.org.

Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio, seeks a committed Anabaptist ***pastoral couple to share a 1.5 time position or an individual to serve as a full-time lead pastor***, to focus on preaching, spiritual care, and peacemaking. Average attendance is 135. Contact Lamar Nisly at nislyl@bluffton.edu; Email: nislyl@bluffton.edu; Phone: 419-358-2628.

Coming to **Montreal** for school or vacation? Support a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada project while enjoying Montreal's trendy "Plateau" district by staying at ***Maison de l'amitié Summer Guestrooms and Student residence***. Student housing available for September; 514-843-4356, www.residencema.ca reservations@maisondelamitie.ca.

Mennonite youth pastor, full-time position. For job description and congregational information form contact: Jim Cashdollar, **First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.**; 309-696-1943.

Goshen College seeks ***.5 FTE faculty member in psychiatric/mental-health nursing*** beginning July 2008. Teach three psych/mental-health nursing courses; committee assignments and student advising. MS in Nursing required, Ph.D. preferred. To apply, please visit the employment page of www.goshen.edu and follow instructions. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with the Mennonite church.

Pastor required for **Good News Mennonite Church**, 2764 Ness Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3J 1A7; Email gnmc@mts.net or doerksen.p.t@gmail.com; phone: 807-548-5169. Competitive salary with benefits.

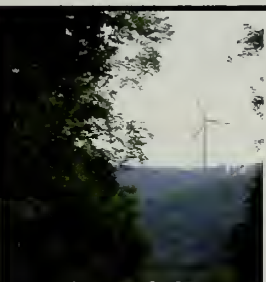
Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA seeks ***part-time regional pastor***. The regional pastor, with a half-time (2.5 days/week) appointment serves congregations in Eastern Ohio and Northwest Pennsylvania. Qualifications: A minimum of 5 years pastoral experience within Mennonite Church USA congregations. Preference will be given to people with a seminary degree or reasonable equivalent. The successful candidate will have strong written and oral communication skills, excellent relational skills, demonstrated leadership, with the ability to articulate conference positions with enthusiasm and passion, and be a perceptive listener. Candidates must be committed to Anabaptism as expressed in the 1995 Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. Salary/Benefits: The half-time assignment (2.5 days/week) salary will be based on denominational guidelines with proportional health-care benefits, vacation and sick days. Date available: Aug. 1, 2008. Applications: ministerial leadership information forms should be submitted to Tom Kauffman at tekauffman@bex.net, or sent to P.O. Box 140065, Toledo, OH 43614. Applications accepted until July 15, 2008, or until the position is filled. See full job description at the Ohio Conference Web site: www.ohio.mennonite.net.

Mennonite Mission Network is seeking a ***budget and financial manager*** to oversee budget development and management, manage internal reporting and controls, and be a collaborative liaison to other departments. The ideal candidate will be committed to Christian faith, Anabaptist belief and practice, and antiracist principles. He/she will have a working knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles, and the ability to analyze financial data and prepare reports, statements and projections using automated reporting systems. A working knowledge of short- and long-term budgeting and forecasting is required. For more information, see staff opportunities at www.Mennonite-Mission.net or call Linda Krueger at 574-523-3009.

Vice president of lending: Position available at **Mennonite Financial** for a visionary experienced leader with 7-10 years progressive management experience in retail banking services. Responsible for planning, organizing and directing the credit union's consumer, real estate and business lending functions and programs. Degree in business or experience in banking required. Please forward to our consultants: North Group Consultants; Email: lbishop@northgroupconsultants.com or Fax: 717-299-9300 your letter of interest, resumé and salary request.

English conversation teachers needed. **Connexus**, a Korea Anabaptist Center ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Ski youth retreat package, Timberline Four Seasons Resort, W.Va., starting at $99 complete two--day trip, two-night lodging/5 meals/skis/lifs/lesson. Info: www.timberlineresort.com; 800-392-0152. **West Virginia Wild and Wonderful.**



MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Jubilee dividends

We pay the highest rate on the first $500 of regular savings, regardless of the amount over $500 in the account. We do this to encourage thrift among all members, not just those with high balances.

Jubilee dividends: *Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Specializing in web development and customized software

The Mennonite
http://www.themennonite.org/
TheMennonite
PODCAST SPOTLIGHT
Home
The Magazine
Blogs
For Discussion
Subscriptions
Submissions
LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

The family we don't see

Regina Shands Stoltzfus

When we stopped for breakfast, I realized my wallet was missing. We were on our way back to northern Indiana after a week at the beach in the southern United States. The trip had gone smoothly—no car trouble, no illness (maybe a little sunburn), no meltdowns. This was an extended family vacation that included four teenagers, one young adult and three middle aged folks; we had a wonderful time of enjoying one another and the beauty of creation.

We did about half the drive and stopped for the night somewhere in Tennessee—planning to get up early the next morning and finish the trip. By 6 a.m. we were on the road, stopping before an hour had passed to get gas. We planned to have breakfast later in the morning when the kids woke up. While Art filled the gas tank, I went across the street to McDonald's to get coffee. Sufficiently fueled and caffeinated, we were on our way.

About three hours later we stopped for breakfast, and I realized I didn't have my wallet. My best guess was that I left it in the restroom of the McDonald's in—what was that town we were in, anyway? Peering at the Atlas, we made our best guess as to where we were when we stopped for gas that morning.

I called the McDonald's customer service 800 number. I waded my way through a number of prompts that asked me if I was calling to complain about service, give a compliment about service, or offer services of my own to the McDonald's corporation. I finally got a person who was sympathetic to my plight and tried to help me by giving a couple of phone numbers for McDonald's restaurants found along I-75 in Tennessee; they didn't pan out. There are thousands of McDonald's, many of them along I-75 in Tennessee.

Pray for those we may never meet or see—or even think about.

In the meantime, I also called my bank and credit card company and talked to very nice people who canceled my cards after verifying my identification. Eventually we realized that as long as we were calling credit card companies, we could try to find out if records were made of purchases immediately—perhaps this way we could find out in what town I used a credit card to make the gas purchase. So one more phone call; one more nice person at the end of the line. We got the name of the town, got a list of all the McDonald's in the town. The next number I called was paydirt—they had my wallet.

All of this took place on a Sunday morning. We were driving through the beautiful Smokey Mountains on the way back from a trip that allowed us to relax, recharge and renew our connections with one another. "Getting away" is not the only way to achieve such a phenomenon, but it makes it easier. It also is a reminder of the need to tend to connections when not away—when in the midst of regular, day-to-day life.

But on the way home from our vacation there was a different insight for me. Driving through those mountains that morning, I was trying to solve a problem caused by my own negligence. I was getting frustrated and anxious. I was close to undoing all the relaxing I had experienced over the previous seven days.

That morning, I talked to at least seven people in cubicles and offices across the country who were pulling a Sunday morning shift on their jobs. I don't know whether they loved their jobs or they hated them. I don't know what kind of lives they lead or what they look like, where they live, what their own families are like. They helped me deal with my foolish little problem without making me feel foolish. Maybe it's silly, but for those moments on the phone, they became part of my community. Yes, I could say that it is part of their training as customer service representatives and that it is their job to be nice to me and help me out—nothing more, nothing less.

But this is not just about my wallet. I often think about this big, wide world with 6 billion other people in it. How do I walk in it? Do I take care to make people feel at ease, to not make them feel foolish even though I may never see them again? Do I take the time to make each encounter—no matter how minute—one that honors the humanity of every person with whom I come in contact?

Most of the time we are oblivious to most of the people who share the planet with us. Our most intimate encounters are with a small number of people: our families, our neighbors, our congregations.

This is a good thing. But maybe it would serve us well to also be mindful of the big picture and not just when it serves our needs. In our "regular, day-to-day lives," might we also pause to remember those connections that may never be visible to us, to pray for those we may never meet or see—or otherwise even think about. We might even build a path to a more peaceful world. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

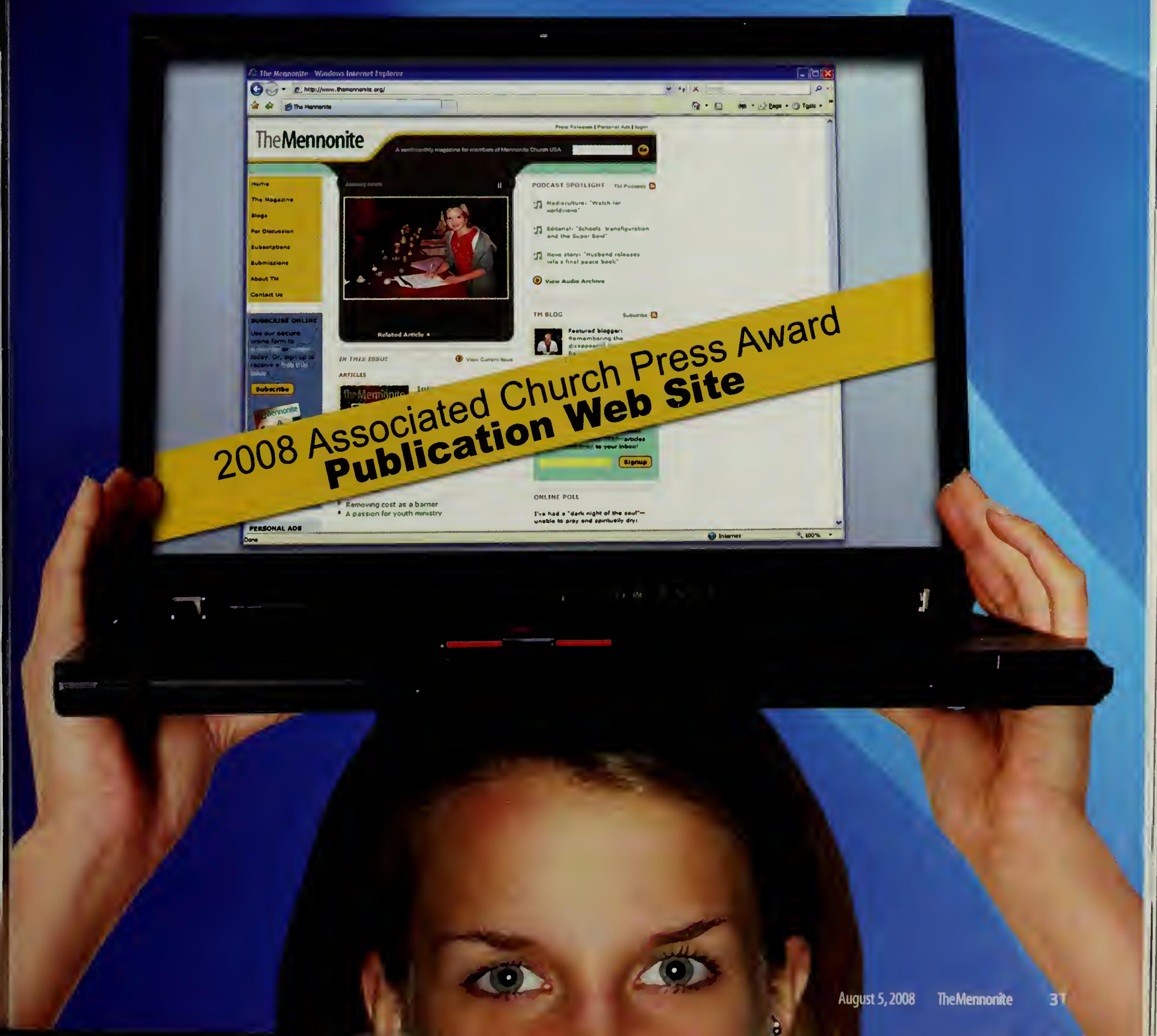
ONLINE

Make this your homepage

Make **www.themennonite.org** your homepage and get the latest news, photos, press releases and blog updates right away.

Since we post photos and news releases from all the schools, agencies and conferences, **www.themennonite.org** offers the most comprehensive news coverage available for Mennonite Church USA.

You can also answer poll questions, subscribe to RSS feeds and view videos.


2008 Associated Church Press Award
Publication Web Site
The Mennonite - Windows Internet Explorer
http://www.themennonite.org/
TheMennonite
Press Releases | Personal Ads | login
Home
The Magazine
Blogs
For Discussion
Subscriptions
Submissions
About TM
Contact Us
SUBSCRIBE ONLINE
Subscribe
PODCAST SPOTLIGHT
Mediaculture: "Watch for worldviews"
Editorial: "Schools, transfiguration and the Super Bowl"
News story: "Husband releases wife's final peace book"
View Audio Archive
TM BLOG
Subscribe
Featured blogger:
Related Article
IN THIS ISSUE
View Current Issue
ARTICLES
Signup
Removing cost as a barrier
A passion for youth ministry
ONLINE POLL
I've had a "dark night of the soul"—unable to pray and spiritually dry:
PERSONAL ADS
Done
Internet
100%

******************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 887 15-DEC-09 S32 P5
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Anna Groff

Preserving access points

As the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board continues to consider its proposal to dissolve all churchwide agency boards and create one new "Leadership Board," the Executive Board should assess how these changes affect access points for young adults—and the process used to make these changes.

A strength of the current Mennonite Church USA structure is the variety of access points for people: congregations, conferences, the denominational leadership, agencies and more. These include multiple opportunities for young adults.

Considering that Mennonite Church USA's membership is shrinking and aging, the value of multiple access points increases. But younger adults who feel a disconnect to the church may feel even greater distance if openings for involvement are reduced.

As I look at the broader church, I see some walls and divisions breaking down. But young adults critique traditional church hierarchies and laud ecumenical relations. Movements like the emerging church pull together people of varying ages and backgrounds and encourage grassroots faith movements.

Regardless of the Executive Board's intentions, if any changes appear to be more about centralization and control, restructuring will be counterintuitive to Mennonite Church USA's vision and goals—that includes prioritizing engagement with young adults.

Leaders must take care while making structural changes so young adults are not lost along the way.

I appreciate that the proposed one-board model includes a requirement that at least one Leadership Board member be under the age of 35 when she or he begins the position. However, I am not convinced this stretches the church very far. That one "young adult representative" could feel like a token and alone in the role. Multiple agency boards—with several young adults serving on each—involve more voices, experiences and thoughts.

During the all-boards meeting in Columbus, Ohio, on June 20, I heard people using the term, "silos." Someone described the term as people or groups of people working at a similar goal but often unaware of the others' work.

While too much disconnect between groups in the church can be problematic, I also worry about the blanket assumption that silos are all bad—especially for a denomination wanting to increase the number and breadth of people involved.

Mennonite Church USA is wise to consider duplication, funding issues and multiple messages sent to members and nonmembers, especially seven years after the merger. But follow-up steps that involve structural changes must be taken with care and with input from people from congregations—the very part of the church the one-board proposal is intended to benefit and support.

"Access" can also be blocked by confusion. The Executive Board members cite "confusion" as the fundamental reason for the one-board model. They say they want to achieve a clearer message and "simplify the system." Church members of all ages should ask themselves: Do we find the organization of Mennonite Church USA too difficult to grasp? Is it too difficult to describe to others? After reflecting on these questions, leaders deserve to hear members' thoughts and feedback.

Ten percent of the *San José 2007* delegates were under age 30. I hope even more young adult delegates weigh in at next summer's convention. One way to broaden such young adult involvement is through congregations. Each congregation should provide places for members to discuss the Executive Board's one-board model proposal—in Sunday school classes, small groups and meetings with delegates to *Columbus 2009*—with efforts to include young adults in the conversations.

While many young people value denominationalism and Anabaptist distinctives, our leaders must take care while making structural changes so church members—especially young adults—are not lost along the way.—*AG*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

August 19, 2008

more than Sunday school

Page 8

12 The treasure of adult Sunday school

16 No more church as usual

18 Sent for the sake of the world

32 It starts with Sunday school

God's big dream

Clarence Rempel is pastor of First Mennonite Church in Newton, Kan.

The clusters of 50-story apartment houses and the crush of people waiting to board the ferry were overwhelming to this country boy now from Kansas. I was accompanying Sheldon Sawatzky, director for east Asia with Mennonite Mission Network, during a sabbatical in 2007. We were in Hong Kong, a former British colony now a special administrative region of China with 7 million people stacked into a little bit of real estate: 16,500 people per square mile. (The population density of Kansas is 33 people per square mile.) Hong Kong is people, people, people everywhere.

After 40 years of mission outreach, there are three Mennonite churches in Hong Kong—Agape, Grace and Hope—with a combined membership of 125. A new church plant in the Tuen Mun area is underway. The church seems microscopic compared with the immensity of the population.

I was reminded that God specializes in microscopic beginnings. What impact could one leader and 12 followers have in the vast Roman Empire of 3 million people? Jesus explained, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed." Tiny. Very tiny. The smallest of garden seeds. Yet when it grows, it becomes the biggest plant in the garden, big enough for birds to sit on its branches. Or God's dream for the world is like a pinch of yeast that a woman works into a big batch of dough until it permeates all through the dough (Matthew 13:31-35).

God's dream starts small. God works with microscopic beginnings that bring about great results.

I met Andy and Susan Wade from Seattle, our mission workers in Hong Kong. Andy heard God's dream in the Old and New Testaments of people from all nations coming together to worship the one true God. He believes that God wants to make that more visible in Hong Kong. And so Andy is planting a new church called All Nations Mennonite Worship Center. It may seem like a pretentious name for a small group of believers and seekers from many different countries meeting every other Sunday. It's planting a mustard seed. Missional leaders act small, act now and dream big.

I also found some yeast in Hong Kong. Nora Iwarat from the Philippines and Mey Idawaty from Indonesia are Mennonite Mission Network-supported mission workers. They have a hospitality and Bible study ministry among the domestic guest workers in Hong Kong. Thirty thousand Filipinos and 90,000 Indonesians come to Hong Kong as household workers in order to send money back home. I thought these would be young girls, but many of the domestic workers are mothers who leave their families in order to help their families survive back home.

Nora and Mey are like yeast permeating this subculture of Hong Kong society with practical help and eternal hope. They staff the Cheung Chau Christian Center, where guest workers can drop in and hang out on their day off. They provide child care. They lead Bible studies. They provide emotional support and guide workers to legal counsel if that's needed. They know the transforming power and love of Jesus. That is God's big dream.

Imagine with me a church where every member carried a part of God's great vision for redeeming the world. Every Sunday we would look forward to being together and hearing or seeing another glimpse of God's big dream for healing and hope carried forward one more step in someone's life. TM

TheMennonite

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Vol. 11, No. 16, August 19, 2008

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412 894 8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church USA

CONTENTS

AUG 19 '08

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

12
Fulmer - 2nd grade - 1941

8 It takes more than Sunday school
For our faith to become more mature today, something more is needed.—*Marlene Kropf*

12 The treasure of adult Sunday school
Five nuggets of a better adult Sunday school—*Kathy Weaver Wenger*

15 Mennonites and Sunday school attendance
Fewer Mennonites are in Sunday school today than in the past.—*Conrad L. Kanagy*

16 No more church as usual
A different way of doing church—*Gerald and Sara Wenger Shenk*

19 Mennonites want Jesus for president
—*Laura Graber Nickel*

20 Long-term 'being' better than quick fix

21 Five Global South leaders review EMM

23 Parents of abducted children get help

24 MVS heroes fight male-pattern violence

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
God's big dream—*Clarence Rempel*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Leadership
Sent for the sake of the world—*David Boshart*

26 For the record

30 Mediaculture
'It is what it is'—*Gordon Houser*

32 Editorial
It starts with Sunday school—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Illustration photo supplied by Gather 'Round, a curriculum project of the Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. **www.gatherround.org**

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The wounds of war

My husband and I were amazed how Carolyn Holderread Heggen captured the whole truth and plight of returning veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. ("The Wounds of War," July 8).

My husband is a veteran who joined the Navy to avoid participating in the Vietnam War. However, in 1972 his ship, the *USS Newport News*, was part of a plan to end the war. On Oct. 1, 1972, a turret exploded, killing 18 men; two more died later. Eight died in the explosion and the rest from toxic smoke inhalation—many dying in their sleep. My husband came within seconds of dying because the canister of a mask was missing. A quick-thinking petty officer dipped a shirt in water and saved my husband's life. Many purple hearts were awarded for lung damage from the smoke. The ship had a crew of 1,500 men, and everyone was deeply affected by this event.

By the second election of President Bush, we were not in a good place concerning the Iraq war. My husband was reliving the whole ship experience, and I was relating to wives waiting to see if they would become widows. We turned to our right-wing Republican church for help and received nothing. We left the church and did not attend any church for two years. I wrote letters to the editor with a general theme about ending the Iraq war. One of the letters was directed at churches that supported the Iraq war. The only response was from John and Mary Ann Moser, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, who sent us an informational package on their "peace" church.

Carolyn Holderread Heggen wrote, "Only a welcoming community of spiritual people can speak with healing integrity to the soul terrors and paralyzing shame of the combat veteran." Everyone who has served in a war zone, even civilians, needs a community that can provide a shelter in the midst of a storm.—*Cheryl Treece, Findlay, Ohio*

Passionate (not angry) peacemakers

Regarding "Passionate (not Angry) Peacemakers" (July 8) by David Brubaker: The first two paragraphs of Brubaker's article lay out a centered discussion about the frustrating areas in which peacemakers find themselves today: in the Sudan, Congo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Colombia and Myanmar or Burma. Left out are such places as the conflicted Native American locations, the Palestinian occupied territories and the possibility of someone bombing Iran between now and the taking of office of the next U.S. administration.

Then Brubaker loses his way. He says, "But passionate, angry peacemakers tend not to bring about positive change in their societies. Passionate, principled peacemakers do." (As if to say that anger can't be a part of a "principled" approach to peacemaking.) Brubaker quotes a lot of Scriptures to prove that anger has no place in "doing" peace. It is there that I differ with his article.

First, I don't find any reference in the article to the "anger" that was present in Jesus as we follow him in his three-year journey through the Middle East. What was his reference to a "brood of vipers"—while talking to the "church" leadership of his day—all about? Second, how did Jesus' frustration play out when his "followers" were more concerned about who was to sit at his right hand in heaven than they were about their work here on earth? Third, can we assume that Jesus was not "angry" as he tipped over the moneychangers' tables in the temple—perhaps the last straw for the power structure's decision to do away with him once and for all? Should we assume that his anger expressed in Scripture had no effect on how we view Jesus' willingness to function in our world and his call to us to go and do likewise?—*Jim Compton-Schmidt, Fresno, Calif.*

Mennonite elected officials

As a politically active new Mennonite, I was intrigued by the article on Mennonite elected officials ("Mennonite Elected Officials Describe How They Put Faith and State Together," July 22). I was disappointed, however, to see that the only actual issues mentioned (abortion, homosexuality, gambling, small government) represented the same tired, old "Christian" political dialogue. Only one featured politician mentioned "freedom and liberty." I wondered aloud why we didn't see represent-

IN THIS ISSUE

For most Mennonite congregations, September marks the beginning of the Sunday school year. Last fall, after we saw statistics about Sunday school attendance (page 15), we commissioned several articles to focus on the value—and limitations—of Sunday school. In our cover story, Marlene Kropf says, "Sunday school … can't carry all the freight needed to form and transform growing Christians" (page 8). Kathy Weaver Wenger reminds us of the reasons for Sunday school in the first place and offers suggestions for investing in this "treasure" (page 12). While Sunday school may have a settled and solid history in most congregations, Gerald and Sara Wenger Shenk call for doing many things differently in "No More Church as Usual" (page 16). Regarding the current efforts to restructure Mennonite Church USA, Executive Board member David Boshart says, "Denominational structures need to repent of competing for the attention and loyalties of conferences and congregations" (page 18).—*Editor* ed any Mennonite politicians who vote their convictions of the Mennonite values that attracted my family to the faith: witnessing for peace, living simply and caring for the poor, the sick and the lost.

My question was astutely addressed by my husband: He figures that politicians who care about the issues Jesus cares about would be as palatable to the political world as Jesus himself.—*Gina Cooke Fiebrlkorn, Eureka, Ill.*

Regarding the July 22 interview of Mennonite elected officials: What an authentic issue on politics, elections and Mennonites. We've had a lot of issues and articles on politics as witness, but this is the first one I've seen on politics as governing. It was very helpful.—*Levi Miller, Scottdale, Pa.*

Who me?

Thanks to Glen Miller for a lucid review of a single-payer health-care system ("Who Me, Advocate for Health Care?" July 22). Miller's points on how to evaluate each presidential candidate's proposals are foundational and useful as a starting point for each of us as we assess the candidates' positions on this most important subject. Thank you for this article.—*J.D. Miller, Hazard, Ky.*

Invite people to follow Jesus

I am as bewildered by J.B. Miller's embrace of Everett Thomas' June 17 editorial ("Relationships. Behaviors, Organization") as I am by the editorial itself. The paragraph Miller quotes as the "goals that should be central" of any reorganization strikes me as the very thing that will ultimately be the demise of Mennonite Church USA. Is our future really dependant upon becoming a better, more efficient, centralized institution that defines faithfulness in terms of institutional support? How does this square with our repeated proclamation that we are people who are centered on Jesus? Have leaders who are not trained in Mennonite seminaries contributed positively to the faith community? Are members who went to public school less faithful and productive in local ministry? Should we ignore the insights of other followers of Jesus because Mennonite Publishing House didn't publish their books? Is mission work done through organizations or ministries not associated with Mennonite Church USA any less mission work?

What is a total waste of time and energy is directing it toward anything other than Jesus' mission and becoming faithful to his call. That will bring us in relationship with Mennonite Church USA institutional forms as they enhance that mission, but it better also call us out of our buildings and into our community. If we invite people outside the church to become "Mennonite" instead of followers of Jesus, we are not doing what Jesus called us to.—*Michael Danner, Metamora, Ill.*

Blurring church and state boundaries

None of us is exempt from acculturation. Ron Hunsicker aptly observes, "We continue to languish in a culture that has blurred the boundaries between church and state" (Readers Say, July 22). The result: Even Mennonite youth are not able to resist the military recruiters' dubious promises. It is good to see that congregations are alerting parents of high school youth to opt out of these high-pressure consultations.

Reading *The Deserter's Tale* (Grove Press, 2007) by Joshua Key (as told to Lawrence Hill) would assist all of us in getting a clear, unvarnished picture of what happens to a soldier's humanity when he is required to obey the killing orders of his commanders. The consequences are awesome. After seven months in Iraq, Joshua discovers that his conscience will no longer allow him to continue a life of crime. Key's story is compelling. He "followed the voice of his conscience and chose desertion rather than complicity" (Cine-Tele-Revue, France).—*Donald D. Kaufman, Newton, Kan.*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Adult Sunday school attendance in our congregation is: (44 votes)

○ Staying the same (30%)

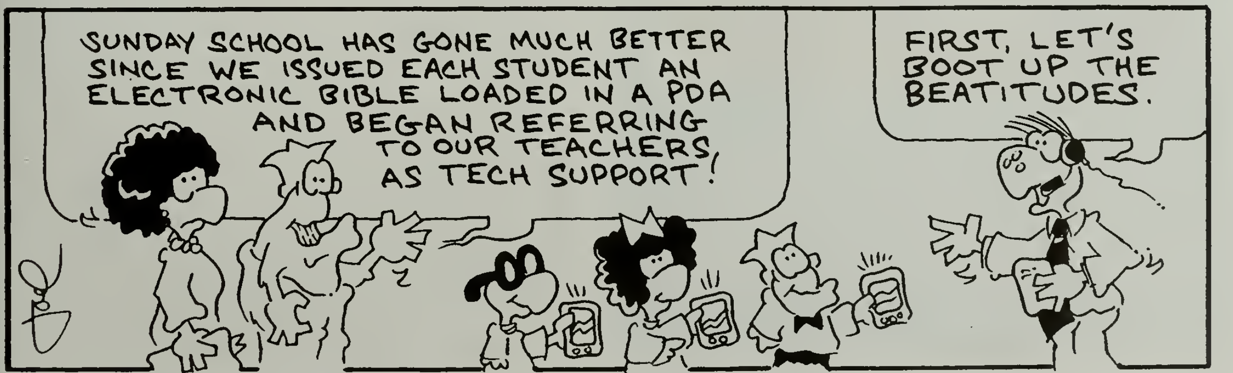
○ Declining (41%)

○ Increasing (18%)

○ Not sure (11%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


SUNDAY SCHOOL HAS GONE MUCH BETTER SINCE WE ISSUED EACH STUDENT AN ELECTRONIC BIBLE LOADED IN A PDA AND BEGAN REFERRING TO OUR TEACHERS AS TECH SUPPORT!
FIRST, LET'S BOOT UP THE BEATITUDES.

IN BRIEF

Think twice about ethanol

Before you buy a car that uses E85 (ethanol-based) fuel, consider this: Ethanol-burning vehicles consume 25 percent more fuel. In this country, ethanol is mostly made from corn, and the amount of corn used to fill an SUV with ethanol could feed a person for a year, according to caranddriver.com. *—The Christian Century*

Care of earth leads to giving

Marlin Groff, Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite School assistant superintendent, calculated the money he saved when riding his scooter or cycle instead of driving his vehicle. Then he donated the money to the school's annual fund. Not only did it provide $773 for LMS, it reduced his consumption of gas and carbon footprint. *—LMS*

Life, liberty, water

Americans use water even more wastefully than oil. The United States relies on nonrenewable groundwater for 50 percent of its daily use, and 36 states now face serious water shortages. Meanwhile, dwindling freshwater supplies around the world, inequitable access to water and corporate control of water, together with impending climate change from fossil fuel emissions, have created a life-or-death situation across the planet. *—YES! magazine*

Asian woman leads Joint Christian Services

BAYANKHONGOR, Mongolia—In February, Kwai Lin Stephens took on the role of executive director of Joint Christian Services (JCS) International. In doing so, she became the first woman and the first non-Western person to lead the Mongolia-based Christian consortium.

In 2007, many at JCS began urging Stephens to consider succeeding interim executive director Marlow Ramsay.

According to Ramsay, who is supported by Mennonite Mission Network and Mennonite Church Canada Witness, Stephens brings ample experience and skill to the leadership role.

Ramsay says Stephens' ethnicity, gender and background will provide JCS with a new, creative perspective. He also acknowledges that some in JCS's diverse constituency will find it challenging to adjust to a leadership style that is neither male nor Western.*—Mennonite Mission Network*

MMA major office upgrade underway

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) held a groundbreaking ceremony July 22 to commemorate the beginning of the organization's major upgrading project at its headquarters in Goshen. DJ Construction was the general contractor.

The building project will be completed in three phases spaced over the next several years. During Phase I, new office space will be added to the east end of the original building. Phase II involves the demolition of existing space on the building's west end and an addition in its place to house a new branch office for Mennonite Financial Federal Credit Union, MMA's banking partner.

MMA's goals for the project include consolidating its growing customer service offices and creating more efficient and flexible work areas to solve current overcrowding.

MMA is targeting gold LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification through the U.S. Green Building Council for the building.*—MMA*

Dottie Kauffmann

Mennonites flock to Nazareth Village

Virginia Spicher, left, works with Razan Andrea, Nazareth Village staff member. In April and May, an unprecedented 11 Mennonite tour groups went to Nazareth Village, a Mennonite Mission Network partner organization. Nazareth Village had been averaging only three Mennonite groups each year since it opened in 2000.*—Mennonite Mission Network*

CPTer faces deportation after public witness

AT-TUWANI, West Bank—The Israeli authorities detained Kristin Anderson, a U.S. citizen working with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) in the South Hebron Hills, on Aug. 4 during a nonviolent action in At-Tuwani. Israeli soldiers took her to the Kiryat Arba police station. The Israeli authorities may move her to the Russian Compound in Jerusalem for a trial and possible deportation.

The public witness was a response to four attacks Israeli settlers perpetrated against Palestinian children in the previous week as they walked to or from summer camp in At-Tuwani. About 300 Palestinian adults and children as well as Israelis and internationals marched from At-Tuwani to Tuba to protest the continuing violence and the expansion of the settlement outpost Havat Ma'on.*—CPT*

Conrad offered a life of medical service

GOSHEN, Ind.—In India, Ethiopia and the United States, medical doctor Paul Conrad served his patients with humility, caring and Christ's love. Conrad, 89, died July 17 in his home in Goshen surrounded by family members.

With his wife, Nancy, Conrad spent 15 years providing medical care and ministry in Dhamtari, India, primarily at the Dhamtari Christian Hospital. He served as medical superintendent, through Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (MBMC), a predecessor agency of Mennonite Mission Network. Conrad then headed the Shantipur Leprosy Hospital near Dhamtari for one year, where he introduced innovative techniques and procedures for preventing complications of leprosy.

Paul Conrad

Conrad was born on Sept. 23, 1918, in Portland, Ore., to Lester and Mabel Geiger Conrad of Canby, Ore. He attended Goshen (Ind.) College and Northwestern University School of Medicine in Chicago. Conrad married Nancy Henley of

Steve Shenk

s tour revisits slave and Civil War history in Virginia

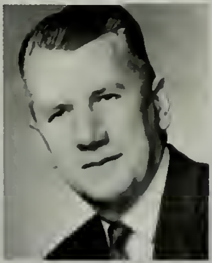
Jenkins, left, describes Long's Chapel in Zenda, a communi-
n Virginia founded by newly freed slaves after the Civil War,
a bus tour sponsored by Valley Brethren-Mennonite
itage Center. Jenkins is leading an effort to preserve Long's
apel and create a Zenda Heritage Center. Forty-six people
ed the June 28 bus tour of historical sites in the Elkton and
da communities of northeastern Rockingham County, Va.
alley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center

Scottdale, Pa., on Jan. 24, 1946, in Nazareth, Ethiopia, where together they established and operated a hospital under the auspices of MBMC for three years.

The Conrads were members of Scottdale (Pa.) Mennonite Church before moving in 2000 to Greencroft Community, Goshen, Ind., where they attended College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Memorial services were held July 20 at College Mennonite Church.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Neufeld, Bethel's seventh president, dies at 88


Vernon Neufeld

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College's seventh president, Vernon H. Neufeld, died July 18 in Bakersfield, Calif., after a brief illness. He was born April 11, 1920, in Shafter, Calif. After working the farm for a few years, he and his family moved to North Newton in 1946, where Neufeld studied at Bethel College, graduating in 1949 with a bachelor of arts in music. They returned to the Shafter farm for a year before moving to Chicago in 1950, where Neufeld attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Before he completed his divinity degree, Neufeld moved the family to Donnellson, Iowa, where he served as pastor of Zion Mennonite Church, commuting to his seminary classes in Chicago. In 1955, the family moved to New Jersey, where Neufeld earned master's and doctoral degrees at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1957 and 1960, respectively.

In 1959, Neufeld was hired to the faculty in the Bethel College department of Bible and religion, and the family moved back to North Newton. After one year of teaching, Neufeld accepted the position of president of Bethel, serving from 1960 to 1967.

Following his tenure as Bethel president, Neufeld and Ruth, his wife, moved to Fresno, Calif., where he became executive director for Mennonite Mental Health Services, serving until his retirement in 1982.

Survivors include Ruth I. Neufeld, his wife of 67 years; son Ramon Neufeld, M.D., and wife Karen of Bakersfield; son Howard Neufeld and wife Carolyn of Portland, Ore.; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.—*Bethel College*

Managing risk brings $1 million dividend

LANCASTER, Pa.—After four years of operation, the Peace Church Risk Retention Group has awarded its 45 member organizations a $1 million dividend, announced Phil Leaman, CEO of Association of Anabaptist Risk Management, which provides overall administration for PCRRG.

The $1 million distribution follows a $500,000 dividend distributed to members in 2007. Leaman attributes PCRRG's success in large part to the emphasis that member organizations have placed on risk management.

PCRRG operates as a reciprocal risk retention group for organizations that are members of MHS Alliance, Association of Brethren Caregivers and Friends Services for the Aging.—*PCRRG*

MPAA gives gift to MutualAid eXchange

OVERLAND PARK, Kan.—On June 1, Mennonite Property Aid Association board members voted to give a $225,000 promissory note with all accrued interest to the MutualAid eXchange Share Fund, Inc. MPAA was founded and established in 1886, having served Mennonite and related groups for over 114 years. In 2000, MPAA became one of the founding mutual aid programs of MAX. The money will go to serve MAX Share Fund, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and one of the major functions of MAX Mutual Aid Ministries program.—*MAX*

—*compiled by Anna Groff*

IN BRIEF

Bicycling compliments

On John D. Yoder's last day before retirement, his employees offered him a tip of their helmets. Eight members of Mennonite Mission Network's communication staff biked as many as 18 miles—one-way—to meet Yoder for a farewell breakfast before forming a peloton (group formation) to the office. Since 1999, Yoder regularly rode the 15-plus miles from his Goshen, Ind., home to the Elkhart, Ind., offices. Yoder retired as director of communications at the end of June but returns as interim senior executive for advancement during August. Leanne Farmwald, who joined Mennonite Mission Network in July 2007 as director of marketing, is the new director of the combined marketing/communication department. Farmwald previously served Mennonite Board of Missions, a predecessor agency of Mennonite Mission Network.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

One less worry

No matter how guilty you feel about your carbon footprint, you don't have to swelter on the highway to the beach. After doing tests at 65 miles per hour, the mileage experts at edmunds.com report that the aerodynamic drag from opening the windows cancels out any fuel savings from turning off the air-conditioner.—*The New York Times*

It takes more than

by Marlene Kropf

Sunday school

For our faith to become mature today, something more is needed.

My earliest memory of church takes place in a Sunday school classroom. I am 3 years old, seated at a low, rectangular, wooden table with a half-dozen other children my age. Our kind, smiling Sunday school teacher has just finished telling us a Bible story. Then she removes the tabletop, and inside the table we discover an amazing surprise—a sandbox. For the rest of the class session, we play together busily.

One could do worse than have such a warm and happy first memory of church.

In many Mennonite congregations, Sunday school classes have nurtured the faith of children, youth and adults for many generations. Dedicated teachers who open the Scriptures with clarity and wisdom have been among our most revered lay leaders. Yet if the faith of 3-year-olds is to grow to mature faith, something more is needed today. It takes more than Sunday school to form the people of God.

In past generations, the institution of Sunday school was supported by other strong elements of congregational life: two worship services every Sunday, leisurely conversation around dinner in the afternoon, Wednesday evening prayer meeting, two weeks of vacation Bible school, perhaps a week at summer church camp, daily family devotions, strong communal ties and explicitly shared values. Secular influences—media, popular entertainment and even books and magazines—were carefully monitored. In such an environment, the congregation's faith was shaped and formed, both implicitly and explicitly, toward gospel values.

Most of those strong supports are gone today. In such an environment, it's no wonder that Sunday school—as good as it may be—can't carry all the freight needed to form and transform growing Christians.

While Mennonite congregations still do a reasonably good job of creating a warm nest for nurturing children and youth (our educational and mentoring resources are second to none), I believe we do a far less adequate job with adults. In fact, we may be inoculating adults against the kind of growth required for maturity by failing to imagine what new or additional forms of spiritual nurture are needed for our time.

We may be inoculating adults against the kind of growth that is required for maturity.

In many churches, those who want to grow beyond conventional faith can't count on support. In fact, such people may face opposition if they admit that old formulations of faith fail to satisfy their questions or if they express a need to engage more rigorously with Scripture or theology, exploring and testing new territory. One 70-year-old told me matter-of-factly, "I go elsewhere [than the church] for spiritual growth."

How do congregations form faith? Our congregations have many built-in opportunities for forming faith—for both beginners and for mature Christians. The most powerful arena of formation obviously is corporate worship. All of us—children, youth, adults and elderly mem-

Continued on page 10

istockphoto.com

Continued from page 9

bers—are here together waiting in God's presence. As we pray, sing and hear God's Word proclaimed, our vision of God is formed, and we become God's people.

In addition, our life together as the body of Christ nurtures our faith in significant ways. When we visit each other in sickness or trouble, offer mutual aid, support the youth at their fund-raising dinners or gather in small groups for Bible study, we are being formed and shaped as Christ's followers. In those settings, our self-centeredness is challenged, and the virtues of love, generosity and "Gelassenheit" are called forth.

Further, our faith is challenged by the demands of our daily work in the world and the needs of sisters and brothers nearby and around the world. We learn to follow the Spirit's guidance, discern our gifts for ministry (within and beyond the church) and give witness to our faith in both words and deeds.

Together, these three central arenas—our corporate life with God, our life together as the body of Christ and our life of witness and service in the world—form a firm foundation for faith.

What is still needed? As important as these central arenas are, however, they are not enough. For faith to become mature today, something more is needed.

What sustained and enlivened the church in the past were carefully discerned practices; these were daily choices and intentional postures and actions that, over time, formed deeper faith and commitment to God's vision for the world. Just as a pianist becomes proficient by continuing to practice musical scales along with more demanding musical works, so a Christian grows to maturity by engaging in the basics—worship, community and witness—but also by discerning and engaging in particular practices that bring about new growth.

The hospitality of Christ is a profound acceptance of others that creates space where strangers and even enemies can become friends.

Such discernment takes into account the demands and challenges of everyday life as well as the persistent inner call of God's Spirit. If we are feeling lethargic in our faith or restless or unfulfilled, how might God's Spirit be nudging us to grow? How might our congregations pay attention to such restlessness and take the risks needed to confront and convert us?

A vision for renewing practices: Among the most promising developments in Christian churches today is renewed attention to spiritual practices. While faith can be deepened in many ways, several practices seem especially pertinent for Mennonite congregations: the practices of hospitality, prayer, discernment and pilgrimage.

Hospitality across boundaries: In her extensive study of American churches in which spiritual growth is flourishing, Diana Butler Bass found that hospitality ranked as one of the strongest practices (*Christianity for the Rest of Us*). She notes that in too many churches, hospitality follows a secular model—friendly greeters and welcoming committees. While these practices are worthwhile, they are not enough to form and shape the people of God. Instead, the hospitality of Christ is a profound acceptance of others that creates space where strangers and even enemies can become friends. Among the first Christians, the practice of hospitality was so generous and daring that it awed even the Roman opponents of Christianity.

Perhaps nothing could do more to bring peace in our world than a renewal of the ancient practice of hospitality. And Mennonites are well equipped for such ministry—we love to gather at tables, we enjoy hearing people's stories, and we are skilled at offering care. For these capacities to be truly transforming, however, we need to offer hospitality beyond our own circles—a practice that can be risky and costly but that also opens us to deeper conversion.

The small group in my own congregation I meet with weekly has accepted such a challenge. A core of six people have been part of this group from its beginning, but over the years we've invited temporary residents in our community to become part of our group while they are here. These have included international families, young adults in transition, a person struggling with mental illness, another person going through separation and divorce, singles as well as married people, and some who simply needed a home-away-from-home. By opening ourselves and our homes to strangers, we've received many wonderful gifts and have also struggled with the demands of such discipleship. Yet along the way, the practice of hospitality is slowly changing us—our image of God, our image of ourselves and our vision of what God desires in the world.

Prayer as listening: Another growing edge for spiritually vital churches is the practice of prayer. Our growth as Christians stagnates if prayer fails to develop. Just as any thriving human relationship requires ongoing effort and commitment, so our life with God requires such attention. Yet the ways many of us learned to pray as children and youth no longer seem adequate. We stumble over theological questions: What does God do when we pray? What are we doing? What outcomes do we expect? And even though we know prayer is essential, it's easy for busy, productive, self-sufficient North

In personal conversation with a trusted friend or mentor, we open our lives—reflecting on the grace we have received from God, confessing our failures and brokenness, and committing ourselves to Christ's way in daily life.

Americans to carry out the church's business without being connected to God in life-giving ways.

It's not a dearth of resources that keeps our prayer anemic today. Rather, we fail to teach, model and train people in prayer, especially the listening modes of prayer—without which our faith cannot grow to maturity. One way people are nurturing the practice of prayer is in retreat experiences. While we don't need to escape from our daily lives to learn to pray, many of us will not discover the deeper dimensions of prayer without such intentional structures as retreats.

A group of women in our area (many of whom are pastors) meet monthly at a nearby retreat center. In these days together we focus on a particular theme, spend the morning in solitude, prayer and journaling, visit with each other over lunch, spend some more time in silence and prayer, then end the day with conversation in small groups, where we reflect on our life with God and our lives of ministry. More than one participant has confessed, "I knew I needed this day apart, but if I hadn't been committed to the group, I wouldn't have done it on my own." Dedicating a day each month to prayer is one way of keeping on the path to a mature relationship with God.

Discernment for action: Noticing and responding to the Spirit's lively work in our lives and in the world is essential for maturing faith. It's not enough to be converted and baptized and to settle into the comfortable routines of church life. Frederick Buechner reminds us, "If God speaks to us at all other than through such official channels as the Bible and the church, then I think that God speaks to us largely through what happens to us" (*Now and Then*). In the ordinary and extraordinary events of our lives and the congregation's life, God continually calls us to turn away from death and turn toward life.

A key spiritual practice for learning and practicing discernment is spiritual friendship or spiritual direction. In personal conversation with a trusted friend or mentor, we open our lives—reflecting on the grace we have received from God, confessing our failures and brokenness, and committing ourselves to Christ's way in daily life. While small groups and Sunday school classes can also be contexts for such conversation, we are often pressed for time in these settings and also find it difficult to be vulnerable and truly transparent. To grow to maturity, each of us needs a trusted companion who will listen deeply and hold us accountable for following the Spirit's guidance.

Pilgrimage of faith: A practice that is becoming increasingly popular in many churches is pilgrimages. These may take the form of learning tours to other parts of the world, service projects in places near and far, disaster relief, or more classic pilgrimages to holy places. A pilgrimage presents opportunities for conversion and growth—if we are attentive to the call to transformation. When we leave our familiar settings, we also leave behind our illusions of control and self-sufficiency. In new and strange environments, we must depend on others—often people of other classes or racial-ethnic backgrounds. New experiences in unfamiliar environments also encourage us to examine the assumptions of our faith and can lead us to fresh experiences of God.

Behind the practice of pilgrimages is the notion that the Christian life itself is a journey of letting go, of trusting more deeply in God's mercy and grace. By going on pilgrimage, we open ourselves to the Spirit's transforming work in our lives, preparing us for our ultimate journey to be with God.

Does Sunday school have a role to fulfill? Certainly Sunday school classes can still fulfill a significant purpose in congregational life—if we are clear about what we want Sunday school to accomplish and if we train teachers for their leadership ministry. What Sunday school cannot do, however, is carry the entire freight for forming and transforming people in their faith. For that to happen, we need intentional spiritual practices that engage our minds, hearts and hands in loving God and our neighbors as ourselves until we "grow up in every way … into Christ" (Ephesians 4:15).

Marlene Kropf is a Mennonite Church USA denominational minister. She lives in Elkhart, Ind., and is a member of Belmont Mennonite Church in Elkhart.

Additional resources

Christianity for the Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church Is Transforming the Faith by Diana Butler Bass (HarperSanFrancisco, 2006)

Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People edited by Dorothy Bass (Jossey-Bass, 1997)

Transforming Congregational Culture by Anthony B. Robinson (Eerdmans, 2003)

The treasure of adult Sunday school

by Kathy Weaver Wenger

Cradle Roll Certificate
This certifies that
Attendance Today 158
Attendance Last Sun
49
53
Nursery Songbook

© 1957 Herald Press

Dreamstime.com

There is an old treasure that some are glad to claim and others prefer to bury. Traditionally it has been known as Sunday school, but it also goes by Christian education, nurture or discipleship classes. The rationale behind its inception, if we dig deep enough, still applies today.

Learning from history: Begun in the late 1700s in England, Sunday school was designed to give instruction to "at risk" children, victims of the industrial revolution. They had no time for school except on Sundays. Instruction bridged the secular and sacred with a vision for evangelism. The inspiration spread to America, where evangelical reformers wanted to have an impact on moral behavior. It was a model of education centered on Christian beliefs. Students learned to read and write—with the Bible as their text—while absorbing the values of their teachers.

Adults became involved in Sunday school primarily as teachers and took training classes. Some parents were spectators in the children's classes, filling time while waiting for their children. The change from public to denominational management and the development of Mennonite instructional materials for all ages, attracted adults and made Sunday school more acceptable in Mennonite churches.

The recent image of Sunday school has been tarnished. Formal education is now readily available. There is increased competition with Sunday morning Bible instruction. Increased leisure activities and mobility vie for people's time and interest. The family unit is less intact. Spirituality has many venues other than church. Will this "institution" that has survived for several hundred years endure the challenges of the future?

Support and encourage teachers. Make them aware of training opportunities.

5 nuggets of a better adult Sunday school

To bury or rename: Some congregations have buried the treasure of adult Sunday school classes because they take time, energy and volunteers to administer. A renewed interest in worship and other ministries also draw from that limited administrative reservoir. Too much is required, they say, to give life to a dying tradition.

Some congregations rename Sunday school to liberate it from educational images, but it is not enough. If computers and other electronics changed only their colors, they would not be in demand.

Let's learn from history instead of casting it aside. Let's reclaim the foundational treasures of Sunday school—evangelism, assimilation and teaching—and invest them in 21st-century Mennonite churches, trusting there will be profit.

Invest the treasure: The treasure of Sunday school is still claimed in Mennonite churches in the eastern United States (see Kanagy's findings in *Road Signs for the Journey*). Why does it continue to be effective in some congregations? That answer may be as varied as the people you ask.

Churches are places to experience community in an impersonal world and can offer opportunities for relating at various depths.

I have been fortunate to be involved with churches that believe offering learning opportunities is a priority. The strength of these education programs attracts people and is a key element in their decision to attend worship regularly. What elements of Sunday school can shape it into something that doesn't just survive but enhances the current and future church? Following are some suggested nuggets and how to invest them.

1. Needs of adults: Intentionally look at what current societal needs adult classes can meet.

Spiritual needs: As followers of Christ, we are called to go, disciple, baptize and teach. The church is responsible to call people to Christ and provide opportunities for spiritual growth. In this gathering, people not only experience God but also receive teaching from God's Word—more than 10 minutes worth. We are challenged to wrestle with what we learn about God and in turn allow God to transform us.

Relational needs: Churches are places to experience community in an impersonal world and can offer opportunities for relating at various depths. People who connect with others in a more intimate setting frequently assimilate more readily into total church life. At least

Continued on page 14

Tradition with a twist

Adult Sunday school classes at Forest Hills Mennonite Church in Leola, Pa., function like small groups. They are divided generally by age groups, with "shepherds" to offer care and activities beyond Sunday mornings. Many classes use the Adult Bible Study guide, but other resources are an option. There is some variety at least one quarter per year, when folks can choose from one or more electives. During that quarter, classes meet in their regular groups one Sunday per month. Forest Hills lives with the challenge of balancing sharing and study. The twists add variety to a system that works for them.—*KWW*

Two time slots

Upper Milford Mennonite Church, Zionsville, Pa., has one class for adults of all ages doing a variety of biblical (like Good Ground) and topical studies. There is always good discussion. Wednesdays offer a more in-depth Bible study. This not only gives a different kind of study but is an opportunity for teachers of children's classes to be nurtured.

Similarly, Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va., invites adults to choose from several classes on Wednesday nights while children and youth attend their activities. These run for six weeks in fall and winter. —*KWW*

Think creatively

A popular elective last summer at James Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., was the *Simply in Season* cookbook with the accompanying Leader's Guide. What does it mean for our time, health and money when we eat seasonally and locally, concerned about God's creation? In addition to provocative discussion there was always something simple to taste and pretty to look at. One Sunday was hands-on, with children using recipes from the *Children's Cookbook*. The class inspired some folks to make changes in their choices.—*KWW*

Continued from page 13

one of those settings should include teaching and faith formation.

Moral guidance: In a world of confusing moral guidelines, where do folks go for direction? A place is needed where people grapple together over making theology practical and share their successes and failures.

Integration: We are created as whole beings; the physical, spiritual and emotional are all connected. The goal of teaching is to have people bring who they are to the Scriptures, encounter God's message, reflect on what that means for them at this time and then act upon that new insight.

2. Astute leadership:

Pastoral: It doesn't all depend on the pastor (thank goodness), but the active and visible support by a pastor of the program and volunteers makes a huge difference. Teaching is a wonderful venue for meaningful interaction between the pastor and the congregation.

Accountability: Unapologetically create a system that includes lay and pastoral leaders. I tell the pastors I teach that although they may not be involved in all the decisions in their education program, they are ultimately responsible for the spiritual formation that goes on in their congregation. Sensitive discernment is necessary in choosing teachers and curriculum.

3. Children and youth programming: Where there are strong children and youth programs, there is likely a strong adult program. Parents are looking for help in passing on the faith and realize they, too, must grow or they have nothing to offer their children. Look at your education program holistically.

4. Call and equip quality teachers: We expect this in our school systems, why should it be any less the case in our churches? These are people who know something about the age group they are teaching, spend time in preparation and teach with passion.

For a period of time the *Adult Bible Study* guide was not popular at my church. One of the pastors recommended we get our best teachers for this class and try it again. It is now a regular class and one of the largest.

Support and encourage teachers. Make them aware of training opportunities. The *Gather 'Round* curriculum Web site (gatherround.org) has some great ideas for calling and encouraging teachers.

5. Variety and flexibility: People learn in different ways. Many adults would be glad to have options other than sitting in a chair and talking (or not talking). I often invite class members to respond to a question or passage of Scripture by drawing, writing or sculpting with Play-Doh. Use music, art and movement. People can express perspectives by literally placing themselves in a spectrum line rather than doing it with a pencil.

Offer classes at a variety of spiritual levels. Some people want to be challenged to go deeper, while others find that intimidating. Do you have something for new Christians for whom the discussion style, format and vocabulary do not assume biblical or theological background?

Include several types of studies. Each quarter my church offers the *Adult Bible Study* lessons, an alternative Bible study, ethics/theology/church history and a practical study. Offering a variety allows flexibility, such as having a class that complements the sermon series. Some topics draw certain ages, but most classes have a variety of ages, including young adults, learning from each other.

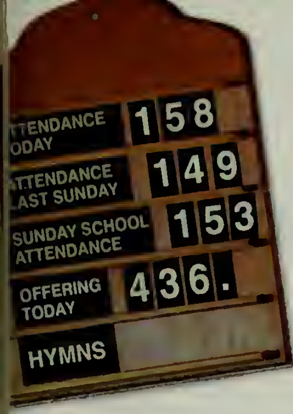
Offer classes in addition to the Sunday morning time slot.

Change is not a bad word. Experiment. Try something new. Take a risk and invest one or two nuggets at a time. Let folks know that trying something one time doesn't mean it is set in stone.

If we want to keep the treasure, it takes commitment from everyone—leaders and lay people—to have a vibrant, healthy, ever-changing education program.

Reaping the rewards: So give an old treasure some new attention and energy. Salvage what was good in the historical Sunday school. It can once again be a means of outreach that includes sound theological teaching and addresses social concerns. Assess the needs of your congregation and community. Faith is explored in Sunday school classes, expressed in worship and lived out during the week. That is integrative faith formation. Implement an educational ministry that creatively and passionately fits your people rather than requiring your people to fit a predetermined model. Then you will find that your investment in an old treasure has paid off.

Kathy Weaver Wenger is the conference resource advocate coordinator for Mennonite Publishing Network. She enjoys connecting people with other people and resources for their ministries. She is a member of Waynesboro (Va.) Mennonite Church.



Mennonites and Sunday school attendance

by Conrad L. Kanagy

In 2006, more than 2,200 members of Mennonite Church USA completed the Mennonite Member Profile, a survey of beliefs and practices. This profile was a follow-up to two previous studies conducted in 1972 and 1989. Included in the profile was a question about an individual's frequency of Sunday school attendance.

Fewer Mennonites are in Sunday school today than in the past. In 1972, 85 percent of Mennonites reported being in Sunday school about "half the time" or more. Today, 67 percent of Mennonites attend at about the same rate (two to three times a month or more). Additional findings about Sunday school attendance today include the following:

Age: Younger people are less likely to attend Sunday school regularly than older people. Fifty percent of Mennonites between the ages of 18 and 25 attend regularly compared with 75 percent of those older than 65 years of age.

Region: In the South, 78 percent of Mennonites attend Sunday school regularly compared with 74 percent in the East, 62 percent in the Midwest, and 52 percent in the West.

Religion's importance: Those who identify their religious beliefs as the "most important thing in their life" are more likely to attend Sunday school regularly (75 percent) than those whose religious beliefs are less important (63 percent).

Born again: Seventy-two percent of Mennonites who are "born again" attend Sunday school regularly compared with 45 percent of those who do not identify themselves as "born again."

Devotional practices: Among those who pray daily, 79 percent attend Sunday school regularly, while among those who pray several times a week, 62 percent are regular Sunday school attenders. But among those who pray only once a week, only 52 percent attend Sunday school regularly.

On the other hand, those who read their Bible daily are no more likely to attend Sunday school regularly (77 percent) than those who read their Bible several times a week (75 percent attend regularly) or only once a week (76 percent attend regularly). Among those who read the Bible less than once a week, however, Sunday school attendance drops dramatically.

Relationship with congregation: Among those who completely agree that their congregation is very important to them, 76 percent attend Sunday school regularly. Among those who mostly agree that their congregation is very important to them, 61 percent attend regularly.

Friends in the congregation: Attendance at Sunday school is associated with the number of "closest" friends one has in the congregation. Among those with none of their closest friends in the congregation, 50 percent attend Sunday school regularly. Among those with even one of their closest friends in the congregation, however, 66 percent attend Sunday school regularly. And among those who could identify between two and five of their closest friends in their congregation, 72-77 percent attend Sunday school regularly.

Commitment to the congregation: Those with very strong levels of commitment to the congregation are more likely to attend Sunday school regularly (77 percent) compared with 60 percent of those who are somewhat strongly committed to their local congregation.

The Mennonite: Seventy-nine percent of those who read *The Mennonite* attend Sunday school regularly compared with 62 percent of those who do not.

These findings suggest that Sunday school attendance is related to at least three factors: (1)demographic variables, including age and region; (2) variables of religiosity, including the importance of one's beliefs, devotional practices and being born again; (3)connection to one's local congregation, including the number of friends one has in the congregation.

Interesting questions that emerge from these findings include: Why are younger Mennonites less engaged in Sunday school? Why do variations exist across regions of the United States? Does Sunday school attendance strengthen one's spiritual life or is it the other way around? Is one's relationship with a congregation enhanced by Sunday school attendance, or is Sunday school attendance the result of a strong relationship to one's congregation? The bottom line is that Sunday school attendance, one's spiritual life and one's relationship with the congregation reinforce and strengthen one another.

Conrad L. Kanagy, author of Road Signs for the Journey: A Profile of Mennonite Church USA, *is associate professor of sociology at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College and an ordained minister in Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference.*

Stockxpert.com

No more church as usual

by Gerald and Sara Wenger Shenk

A colleague walked into Sara's office one day at the seminary and talked about how going to church was causing him to lose his faith. "So much of church is deadly," he said.

That's what we're hearing from more and more students who come to seminary. They love the church but want to find ways to do and be church "outside the box."

George Barna of the Barna Institute says that many, many Christians are no longer attending congregational services but seeking alternative forms of church. This "new form of religious community" is of such magnitude that it will "reshape the religious world within the next two decades," he says. These folks want more of God and less of programmed religion. They meet in coffee shops, bars, parking lots and living rooms.

Barna doesn't give the full picture, of course, and it's easy to take exception to some of his research. But it seems others are saying the same all over the place.

Why does the pastor rarely engage the congregation in dialogue about the Scripture, getting us to talk to each other and talk back to him or her with real questions?

There are so many questions we could ask about the way we do church:

Why do we sit in rows, looking at the backs of peoples' heads, for example? Well-known worship scholar James White observes that it wasn't until the 14th century that "sitting down on the job" occurred in Western Christendom. Congregations that were mobile became static, perhaps "the most significant change in Christian worship since Constantine."

Why are we so passive as congregations, sitting there as if we're watching a performance, allowing worship (the work of the people) to be scripted and done for us, reduced to lines on a bulletin?

Why do the worship planners talk endlessly about the mechanics of worship, about who will do what, where, in what order and with what stage props but rarely spend time together listening to the Scriptures and the Spirit for what God may be saying to us?

Why does the pastor rarely engage the congregation in dialogue about the Scripture, getting us to talk to each other and talk back to him or her with real questions?

Why don't we get up and move around and have conversations about what's happening in the course of the service? Why don't we include the children in those conversations?

Why don't we have Communion every week, allowing it to become a vital heartbeat of congregational life, like an altar call of recommitment, like a flesh-and-blood encounter with Jesus? And why do instructions about Communion take center stage right at the climactic moment (file up this aisle, down that one, dip this, hold that and let it all be prim, proper and as somber and awkward as we can make it)?

Why are the Scriptures read like they have no soul, no life, read while people are shuffling their bulletins—reading their announcements, slouching in their chairs—read like no one is listening. And why would they, because who cares, and what does it have to do with anything anyway?

Why are written litanies so complicated with left reads here and right reads there, men read this and women that, and young this and old that, until we're so confused that we entirely miss the point lest we mess up?

Why is music and singing dominated by someone standing up front giving instructions before and between every song, and then, in metronome fashion, leading us like a choir who perfunctorily stands up or sits down. Why isn't it more like the pulsing of people breathing, dancing, weeping and exalting in sung prayer and praise?

Why do we hear so few testimonials about the difference Scripture/worship/prayer made in someone's work throughout the week? Why do we know so little about the impact of worship and prayer on how we live our daily lives?

We could go on, but we've probably already offended 98 percent of church goers and worship planners. So we'll quit before we lose that final 2 percent. Perhaps it's just that we've had too much of church as usual—and we know we're not alone.

Please don't get us wrong. We love the church with every cell of our bodies (don't ask us to verify that scientifically). We've both attended churches all our lives—of various denominations, depending on where we were living at the time. We've offered varying degrees of leadership along the way.

To be honest, Sara, if she had her druthers, would often choose "high church" worship because she loves ancient liturgies. Gerald's druthers would take him more in the direction of a house church.

But in this we're united: We both think it's time to shake off the shackles of church as we know it

A different way of doing church

in order to become more imaginative, surprising, reverential and authentic. That's exactly what a whole group of us are trying to do at The Table, an emerging Mennonite congregation in Harrisonburg, Va.

It's hardly a model church. It doesn't do even a quarter of the good work, education and neighbor care that the established congregations in our neighborhood do. We don't hold a candle to what they accomplish in programs for the elderly, children, marriage enrichment, church camps and refugee resettlement.

But we're reveling in "godly play." We're experimenting with oxygenating our worship and life together. We're finding our way as an emerging church—far, far from having arrived. But these are some things with which we are experimenting.

We have a Design Team of leaders, most of whom are young adults. When Virginia Conference wonders whether it's time for two of us to be ordained, we realize that no, if ordination is to happen, it would need to involve five or six of us.

We have worship hosts for each Sunday who call together a team to listen to the Scriptures, usually on Wednesday evenings. Together they prayerfully discern how to lead the gathered community in worship.

Most Sundays, we "remember who we are" in a brief ritual—a community of prayer centered on Jesus the light of the world; a covenant community who declares our commitment publicly to love God and neighbor—by remembering our baptism.

We sing—oh, how we sing—and sometimes dance. Young musicians are mentored to join in with passion and imagination—drumming, singing, playing instruments. New music is composed and becomes our lifeblood.

We talk to each other in the course of the service, intentionally building in response time to engage with what we're hearing from the sermon, with circle groups, silence, strolling out on the hillside for meditation, drawing, journaling.

We celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday, a weekly community encounter with Jesus; like a steady heartbeat (in remembrance) but also mysteriously new each Sunday in light of our experience with that week's Scriptures.

Every Sunday we're invited to eat together in our homes after the service. There we continue conversation about how to live as Christ-followers, joining with God's work in the world. We have weekly prayers with a few hardy people every Wednesday evening in someone's home.

One Sunday evening, for example, we had what is becoming a monthly event: Soup & a Question. Around the table with a simple meal of soup and bread, we ask questions (only questions, with none being off limits) on the topic of the evening. Later we gather in the living room to share our corporate wisdom. That week the topic was sexual wholeness: What is it? Twelve of us, married and single, mostly young adults, had frank conversation about this most private and ubiquitous of subjects. We spoke of how we have a long way to go to overcome our perception of the general church's prudish reluctance to talk about or deal honestly with sexuality—both its power to horribly harm and to be wholly wonderful.

We spoke of how we have a long way to go to overcome our perception of the general church's prudish reluctance to talk about or deal honestly with sexuality.

The day after that conversation, one of the young adults commented to Sara that it was the first such conversation he's ever had. As it began, he felt like he was walking on a frozen pond, then suddenly falling through into the freezing water, terribly alert, scared, yet keen to stay afloat, only to find that others were there to rescue him and bring him to warmth and safety. The experience, he said, left him a new person, with a deeper respect for the lake and a deeper trust in the people who brought him to safety.

Gerald, in describing a course he teaches at the seminary called "Experimental Congregations" said, "I'm trying to ruin my students for good." And so it is. At a recent Table Communion, some of us spontaneously raised our Communion glasses in a toast to Jesus.

And we do so here again, symbolically: Here's to the goodness of the lively kingdom of God among us. No more church as usual.

Gerald and Sara Shenk, who teach at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va., along with musicians Jim and Angie Clemens, started meeting during Advent 2006 as an emerging church.

Sent for the sake of the world

David Boshart is a member of the Mennonite USA Executive Board and is pastor at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Mennonite Church USA was born in 2001. In 2005, church leaders sharpened the purpose of this new denomination in the statement "Mennonite Church USA 2020: Joining in God's activity in the world, WE develop and nurture missional Mennonite congregations of many cultures." All vision work is hard. It's been hard for the Executive Board, the church's agencies, area conferences and congregations to figure out how to work on this task. We've "been to the mountain" and sense that God has a wonderful future for us, but the way that leads from here to there isn't always clear.

In the process, fear is at work among us as we move toward this future. We are afraid that certain things we love about being Mennonite are slipping through our fingers. Listening to our fears while seeking God's future has caused boards, agencies and conferences to decide that the most important work is strengthening congregations we fear are withering.

Denominational structures need to repent of competing for the attention and loyalties of conferences and congregations.

The thing we may have forgotten is that when the risen Jesus shows up, he says to his disciples, "Do not be afraid." If we want to be missional, we begin with the belief that the peace and wholeness of God are more real and constant than sin, coercive power and brokenness. Missional people no longer wonder how the experiment of creation ends. Out of boundless love God's mission fixes the fallen places where sin dwells in the world and makes them whole and new. God's mode for doing this is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

We all know that evil is real. But do we understand that evil is temporary? Jesus is alive on the throne, and of his kingdom there will be no end. This kingdom has come and is coming. This kingdom is good news and God's preferred future. God has announced it. But let us not be confused. This kingdom is something God does in Jesus. We enter it and receive it, but we do not build it.

God so loved the world that he sent his Son to the world. The risen Jesus has said, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:21-22). The fatal flaw in our failed attempts to become missional is that fear of our losses has placed congregations at the center of God's mission.

We pour our best energies into making our congregations strong. But if we are sent as Jesus was sent, the focus of our energy must be directed to the world. If we are sent as Jesus was sent, the church cannot be static or fixed in one place. The sent church cannot be faithful without being present to those places that remain broken, alienated and enslaved. Empowered by the Spirit, the church moves always deeper into the world's fallenness to become a foretaste and the first voice announcing that there is a whole new creation under the reign of God.

The mission of the church in all its parts is not to build the kingdom of God. Rather, the church invites the broken places of the world that have yet to know the power of God's love to receive and enter the reign of God.

If we keep directing our best resources to congregations hoping to keep congregations from weakening, denominational leaders and agencies will be seen as doing something to the church rather than with the church. Further, these structures will reinforce a false sense of mission in our congregations that the church is for the church's sake. Jesus has sent us to be the church for the sake of the world.

In order to "nurture missional congregations of many cultures" denominational structures need to repent of competing for the attention and loyalties of conferences and congregations. All expressions of the church will join together to imagine changeable and nimble patterns in order to announce the love of God that has the power to transform death to life, slavery to freedom, sin to righteousness, and despair to hope.

Rather than understand the local, regional and national parts of the church as levels, they will become players on the same team, each player having its way of announcing to the world life under God's reign. With the world's need as the focus of the church's mission, the church will find new ways of collaborating, relating and organizing to act with one voice and as one body sent to announce that Messiah has come for the sake of the world. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Let the light of Jesus shine through**—John F. Murray
- **A house added to others**—Stanley W. Green

Mennonites want Jesus for president

National campaign brings alternative political perspective to Raleigh, N.C.

The Jesus for President national campaign tour stopped in Raleigh, N.C., on July 22. Although there was only a handful of local Mennonites in the crowd of 700, Anabaptist and Mennonite influence in the campaign was obvious.

Through storytelling and worship, Shane Claiborne and Chris Haw described an alternative political perspective: Jesus for President. Their message includes a strong emphasis on peace and puts a high value on communities of believers who reject the world's ways and live their lives according to Jesus' teachings.

Authors of the book *Jesus for President*, the two men stopped in Raleigh near the end of a month-long tour that has attracted crowds of 500 to 1,000 people at every event. They described their beliefs as a mix of Catholic and Protestant with a Mennonite flavor and acknowledged that much of what they wrote has direct connections to Mennonite people and Anabaptist ideas.

"Some people have called our book 'John Howard Yoder illustrated,' " said Haw. "That's a great compliment, because Yoder's definitely in the mix of how we've interpreted Jesus."

Their book includes a collection of stories illustrating how people are living Jesus' example. They tell the story of a conservative Mennonite farming community in Belize visited by a thief who stole all the community's money. In response, the community did two things: (1) printed their own money, which decreased the threat of theft by those outside the community, and (2) once the thief was released from prison, built him a house.

Although the principles described in *Jesus for President* are well-known to Mennonites, according to Isaac Villegas, pastor of Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship, Mennonites can always use a reminder.

"Sometimes we need outsiders to remind us of the best parts of our tradition," says Villegas. "Shane Claiborne and Chris Haw don't claim to offer anything new about Jesus and politics. They simply piece together the best of what Mennonites have to offer ... we need all the help we can get to remember how Mennonites of the past tended to cultivate a healthy suspicion when it comes to the promises of governments."

In *Jesus for President*, Claiborne and Haw ask Christians to think differently about their political and religious allegiance, reevaluate the church's role in the arena of American power and politics and examine the way they live out their faith.

"The Jesus story he's telling is the same story we're familiar with," said Dennis Boos, member of Raleigh Mennonite Church. He and his wife, Kathy, are reading and discussing *Jesus for President* with their small group from church.

Luke Baker

Shane Claiborne addresses the Jesus for President crowd in Raleigh, N.C., on July 22.

The tour came to Raleigh by invitation from the Eastern Carolina District of Virginia Mennonite Conference, with partial sponsorship from the North Carolina Council of Churches. Duane Beck, pastor of Raleigh Mennonite Church, first thought of inviting Claiborne and Haw to add Raleigh to their tour. He envisioned the event as a way for like-minded people with Anabaptist ideas or tendencies to come together in an area of the country where there are few Mennonites.

"When I came down here [to North Carolina]," Beck said, "I assumed there were well over a thousand Anabaptists here, and we didn't know them, and they weren't all Mennonites, and some of them didn't know they were Anabaptists. ... My dream was to see if there was a way to network these people."

Folks are looking for ... authenticity and integrity: things that you can really wrap your hands around.—Shane Claiborne

The Jesus for President event was one such way. It attracted about 700 people, from Pentecostals to Episcopalians, with a few Mennonites sprinkled throughout.

After the event, four area Mennonite pastors collaborated to set up a Web site with discussion forums, information about Mennonite churches and upcoming events. The site, www.anabaptistexchange.com, was projected on a screen in front of the audience before the Jesus for President event began.—*Laura Graber Nickel*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

Long-term 'being' better than quick fix

Mission Network honors 19 workers; combined service more than 300 years.

Connie Byler, right, was honored for over 25 years of mission by Mennonite Mission Network.

Recognizing faithful commitment in an instant-gratification society, Mennonite Mission Network honored 19 long-term mission workers during the annual Overseas Mission Seminar held at Goshen (Ind.) College July 19-25.

The 19 workers have dedicated more than 300 years of their combined lives to ministry with Mission Network and its predecessor agencies. Many of them serve in sensitive areas where identification by name and location would be detrimental to local believers and co-workers.

James Krabill, Mennonite Mission Network senior executive for Global Ministries, explained the importance of mission workers willing to dedicate a large portion of their lives to ministry.

"In virtually every country of the world beyond our own," Krabill said, "building lasting relationships is a much higher cultural value than performing short-term, quick-fix projects. 'Being,' in other words, takes strong precedence over 'doing.' For that to happen, it takes time."

Building lasting relationships is a much higher cultural value than performing short-term, quick-fix projects. —James Krabill

While short-term mission can provide significant learning opportunities for participants, it is a first step toward something more meaningful. Short cross-cultural experiences are almost always enhanced when coordinated with relationships already established by long-term workers who have taken the time to build the bridges necessary for mutual sharing, Krabill said.

Augustín Melguizo, pastor of the Comunidad Evangélica Menonita de Burgos (Evangelical Mennonite Community of Burgos) in Spain, expressed appreciation in email communication for the commitment and maturity of Connie and Dennis Byler, recognized by Mennonite Mission Network for surpassing 25 years in mission work.

"Many missionaries who come to Spain are pressured by their mission agencies to achieve results in a short amount of time," Melguizo said. "One of the elements that can cause offense when interacting with Spanish people is one's concept of time. First, you must dedicate yourself to getting to know people and winning them with friendship and a good testimony. Then after several years, you can begin to benefit from some occasions to present the gospel clearly."

Responding to an invitation to provide leadership for a dispirited remnant of the "Jesus movement" at odds with the Catholic Church, the Bylers arrived in Burgos in 1981. Through Bible study and living out their faith, they led the young Christians to become, in Melguizo's words, "one of the major Mennonite centers in Europe today."

Another mission worker who was honored with the Bylers has served as an evangelist, teacher and church leader for 28 years in a country where being identified as a Christian can be life-threatening. Although he is now serving with Mennonite Mission Network, he is grateful that he began working in this country in a self-supporting capacity. Rubbing elbows in the daily grind of earning a livelihood helps create integrity in ministry, he said.

According to this mission worker, an important aspect of long-term mission commitment is the ability to speak in a language that people understand. Often short-term mission workers have an equivalent of a third-grade linguistic proficiency, so the only gospel they can communicate is a simplistic one, he said.

Connie Byler described the reality in Spain, where most congregations are too small to support a pastor, obliging church leaders to earn a living employed outside the church. Pastors' off-work hours are consumed by the needs of the local congregation, permitting little energy for the Anabaptist network in Spain and throughout Europe that the Bylers are helping nurture through teaching, writing, a Web site and youth ministries.

Other honored mission workers from countries without security issues included: Christine and Phil Lindell-Detweiler, Liberia, Benin and South Africa, since 1991; Kaz and Lois Enomoto, Japan, since 1998; Jim and Paula Hanes, Senegal, since 1998; Carol and Jonathan Bornman, Senegal, since 1999; Irene Bornman, Senegal, since 1999; and Betsy and Steve Dintaman, Lithuania, since 2003. *—Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of Mennonite Mission Network*

Five Global South leaders review EMM

Kenyan leader: Dynamics in Africa have changed dramatically since 1934.

As many mission agencies do, Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) conducts periodic reviews of its overseas ministry locations, but during the first week of June the tables were turned.

At EMM's invitation, five mission leaders from Ethiopia, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya and Singapore came to review EMM's work and make recommendations. They met with the EMM board and executive committee, staff clusters and individuals from all departments, and Lancaster Mennonite Conference bishops. They also ministered in LMC congregations on June 1.

Philip Okeyo, bishop of the Nairobi District of the Kenya Mennonite Church and chair of the task group, said, "We're a product of EMM, and we're proud of you—our 'mother.' But mission dynamics have changed dramatically since you first sent missionaries to Africa in 1934."

"Because someone in the [United States] gave money, I came to God," said Melvin Fernandez, a businessman and regional leader of 30 Mennonite churches in the Sula region of Honduras. "You gave so that we can give. Now we are in this mission task together. We're interdependent."

In their interaction with the EMM board, the peer review team noted the blessing of increased cooperation and fellowship around a common mission task. They all sense a deep call and responsibility—now that strong reproducing churches have been established in their nations—for Indonesians to be reaching Indonesians, Hondurans reaching Hondurans, and all to reach cross-culturally beyond themselves.

Abdi said that in this era, fellowship and partnership fostered by fraternal visits, the annual gatherings of the International Missions Association, and regional mission trainings are far more valuable than funds for ongoing programs.

Tan Kok Beng, a Mennonite church planter and CEO of the Asia-Pacific Mission in Singapore, noted that the seed money EMM shared to help launch the Mennonite church in Singapore was a great boon the first two years; now the church is self-supporting and starting other churches.

Siyum Gebretsadik, a leader of the Meserete Kristos Church of Ethiopia during its 10 underground years and general secretary of the Evangelical Association of Ethiopia, challenged the board to deeper intercession for our communities. "To be prayerless is to fail God," he said.

In their concluding observations and recommendations the peer review team emphasized that EMM's primary focus should always be evangelism and church planting among the least-reached peoples of the world. EMM may waste resources and energy by still sending missionaries to nations where the church is already matured and strong, they said.

Tammy Evans

Eastern Mennonite Missions staff members Tilahun Beyene (left) and Steve Shank (right) speak with Philip Okeyo, church leader and peer review team member from Kenya.

They recommended that every missionary sent out by EMM be competent in evangelism, discipleship and church planting and that EMM and LMC more proactively train and mentor young people for missions and church leadership. They are concerned about the "graying" of Mennonite churches and mission programs.

They recommended the beginning of a "school for church planting" to equip church planters for North America and cross-cultural missionaries and church planters.

Because someone in the U.S. gave money, I came to God. . . . Now we are in this mission task together.—Melvin Fernandez

As he reflected on their visit, Richard Showalter, EMM president, said, "This has been one of the most extraordinary and helpful reviews EMM has ever had. Senior EMM staff are giving prayerful consideration to these recommendations, and I believe it will help us make positive, timely changes.

"It was a privilege to have these 'giants' walk among us with the confidence born of the anointing of the Spirit, the humility of servants of Jesus and the love of God. We sensed that from the very beginning they were not only listening to us but to the Holy Spirit."—*Jewel Showalter of Eastern Mennonite Missions*

MCC group witnesses human rights crisis

Mennonite Central Committee delegation participates in 75-mile 'Walk for Life.'

DESCONOCIDO

Tim Hoover

A Mennonite Central Committee delegation participates in a 75-mile walk from Sonora, Mexico, to Tucson, Ariz., from May 28 to June 3.

Since the early 1990s, thousands of migrants have traveled across the desert from Sasabe, Sonora, Mexico, to Tucson, Ariz. This stretch of desert, like other such areas in California and Texas, is called a migrant trail because so many use it to cross the border. An estimated 4,000 migrants have lost their lives crossing since 1994, the year of implementation of increased border security.

From May 28 to June 3, 11 members of a Mennonite Central Committee delegation participated in "Migrant Trail: We Walk for Life," a 75-mile walk from Sasabe to Tucson. This annual event, now in its fifth year, is sponsored by Migrant Trail Walk Committee and other organizations, including West Coast MCC. It aims to call attention to the human rights crisis on the border.

Shalom Mennonite Fellowship of Tucson, Ariz., provided lodging for a three-day orientation for participants given by West Coast MCC and Central States MCC. Then the MCC delegation joined a group of 65 walkers total from a variety of religious groups and human rights organizations.

Esther Harder of Mountain Lake, Minn., says, "We were told that there could be around 2,000 people in the desert at any given time, but they were only whispers to us; we only came across a handful. Several came [to the Migrant Trail group] when they had no strength left and received water and food."

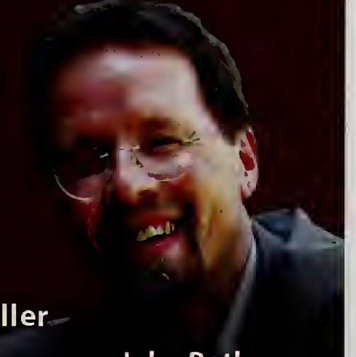
As early as 5 a.m., the participants began their daily walk. The temperature often climbed into the 90s, so walkers would stop around noon.

On the first day, Valerie Ong, staff member with MCC's Washington Office, searched for relief from the heat.

"After walking about 13 miles," she says, "I began to wonder if I would survive the next five days as a participant."

Saulo Padilla, director of the Office on Immigration for MCC U.S., says that addressing "the migrant trail history, the purpose for the walk, the tough situations immigrants face in the desert (and) responses by participants" in the walk is an invitation for others to get involved in immigration work.

The event ended in a celebration, a brief press conference and a foot-washing ceremony. Participants were encouraged to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform and to keep praying.—*Cathryn Clinton of Mennonite Central Committee*



ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE PRESENTS

Evangelical Anabaptist Symposium 2008

Following Christ: Discovering a Vital Biblical Anabaptism

November 13-15

2008 speakers: John Roth, Jonathan Sauder, Phil Weber, Jeremy Miller

John Roth
Goshen College

To register, visit www.rosedale.edu or call 740-857-1311.

Ron Sider, speaking at RBC's Evangelical Anabaptist Symposium 2006: "I really endorse and embrace the vision of evangelical Anabaptism that you're working on. I hope it will flourish and become the theme of the whole Mennonite church."

Parents of abducted children get help

Ugandan organization provides trauma recovery strategies, reconciliation.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is using the gifts of its supporters to meet needs throughout the world, including peacebuilding projects in Sudan and Uganda. Donations that exceeded projections have funded a $7.2-million plan initiated in 2006 for special projects over three to five years.

Gena Sheller, MCC service worker, is coordinator for justice and peace in the Catholic Diocese of Rumbek, Sudan. Sheller works with the churches' lay leaders, who often also are community leaders, as they wrestle with issues and explore how their faith leads them to respond.

MCC's peacebuilding work in East Africa also includes partnership with Concerned Parents Association in Uganda. MCC workers Ben and Holly Porter of Denver serve with CPA, Ben as a technical adviser to a program for trainers in trauma recovery strategies and Holly in community-wide reconciliation activities.

In 1996, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) attacked St. Mary's Aboke boarding school, abducting 139 girls. A nun followed the soldiers and pleaded for the girls' release. They agreed to release 109 girls but kept 30 as prisoners.

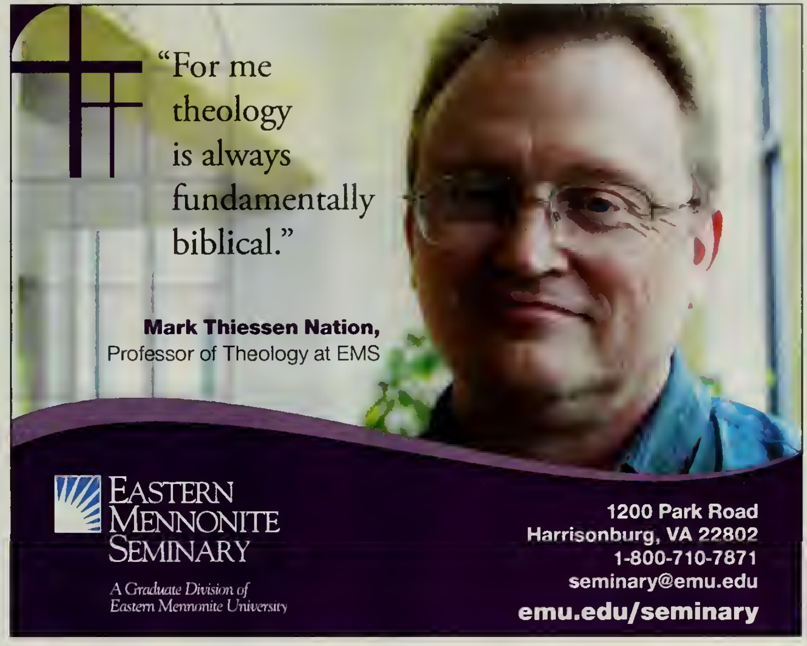
Their parents decided to work together to try to free their daughters and formed CPA. Then they realized that they were not alone—the LRA was abducting children throughout northern Uganda.

"We wanted to get out of our pain in a positive way and help others get out of their pain," says Angelina Atyam, chair of CPA and the mother of a girl who was abducted from St. Mary's Aboke. Twenty-four of the 30 girls have escaped, including Atyam's daughter. Four have died, and two are believed to still be with the LRA.

CPA started a reception center for children who escape the LRA and organized a network of support groups for parents of abducted children. The organization helped document more than 24,000 child abductions in northern Uganda and bring international attention to these atrocities.

Ron Flaming, international program department director, says that the overall $7.2-million plan covers work not only in Sudan and Uganda but also in Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Palestine, Paraguay and other countries.

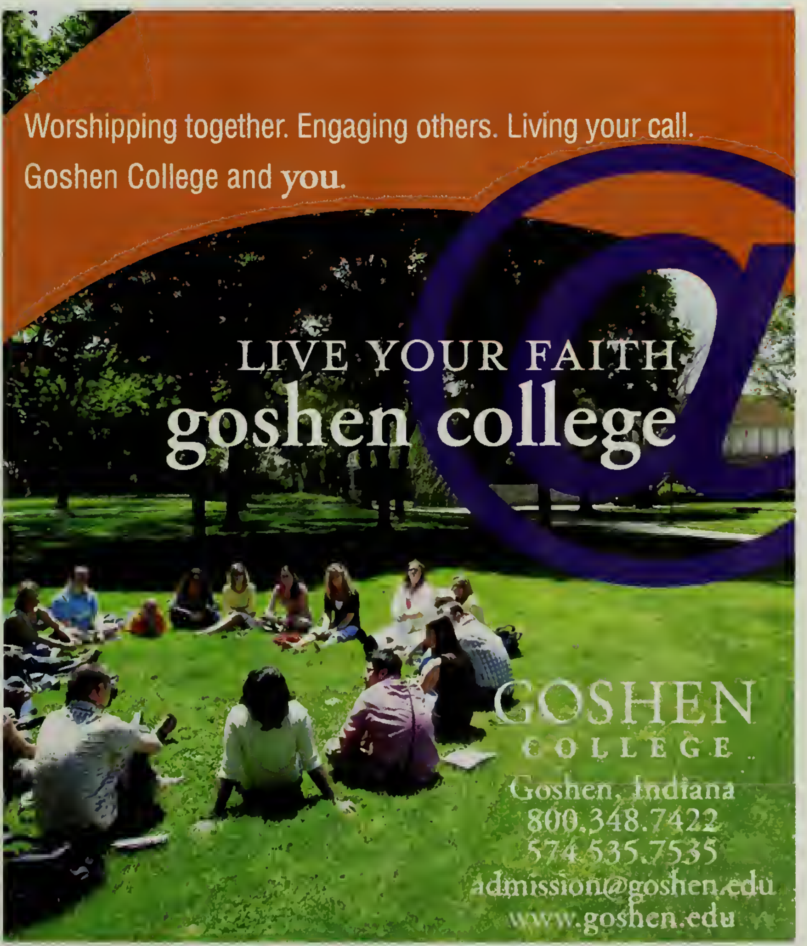
"We have these funds partly due to the recent strength of the Canadian dollar [but] also because income has exceeded projections in the past two to three years," Flaming says. "The needs around the world are enormous and, in fact, increases have been offset in part by the weak dollar abroad. All the funds are allocated. This situation has provided a mechanism to respond to some special needs faithfully and creatively."—*Mennonite Central Committee*


"For me theology is always fundamentally biblical."

Mark Thiessen Nation,
Professor of Theology at EMS

Eastern Mennonite Seminary
A Graduate Division of Eastern Mennonite University

1200 Park Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
1-800-710-7871
seminary@emu.edu
emu.edu/seminary


Worshipping together. Engaging others. Living your call.
Goshen College and **you**.

LIVE YOUR FAITH @ goshen college

GOSHEN COLLEGE
Goshen, Indiana
800.348.7422
574.535.7535
admission@goshen.edu
www.goshen.edu

MVS heroes fight male-pattern violence

Three men 'take a stand against violence' on the streets of Elkhart, Ind.

Katie Rogers

Nicholas Cloutier (right) talks to Mark McCain about an upcoming event to help end male violence against women.

It took a week of soaking costumes in a bathtub to wash the sweat out, but for three superheroes, it was worth it.

The superhero personas successfully brought attention to the need for men to become active in stopping violence against women.

Nicholas Cloutier, CJ Irelan and Jason Shenk, all residents of the Elkhart (Ind.) Mennonite Voluntary Service house, donned Superman, Spider-Man and Batman costumes, respectively, for two hours in nearly 90-degree weather.

Cloutier, of Universalist Unitarian Church, Waterville, Maine, organized the event, "Be a real-life hero: Take a stand against violence," through Individuals & Families in Transition (formerly Family Services of Elkhart County), where he serves. The event is part of iFiT's larger campaign, Men Encouraging Nonviolence (MEN).

On June 13, at Elkhart's Civic Plaza, the MEN superheroes organized cooperative children's games. Adults received information and talked about gender-based domestic violence prevention.

"One by one, person by person, [our efforts] are making a difference," says Cloutier.

Shenk, Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., says, "Often people talk about domestic violence in the passive voice. We say '300 women have survived domestic violence' instead of '300 men committed domestic violence.' There are so many men involved in acts of violence. We need to promote a nonviolent and healthy masculinity."

MEN intends to collaborate and remain in conversation with preexisting women's organizations to prevent domestic violence.

"To be a part of the feminist movement is good, but to take it over would be a travesty," says Cloutier.

Although one-time events don't change a lot of things, explains Shenk, "Be a real-life hero" brought attention to MEN and allowed participants to establish relationships necessary to creating nonviolent solutions.

"Nonviolence isn't just about not having a gun or not going to war," says Shenk. "It is an active respect or reverence that I seek to cultivate in all my relationships."

MVS workers at Jubilee House attempt to live an ethic of nonviolence. They hold each other accountable to avoid language that is infiltrated by violence, Cloutier says.

According to Irelan, that violence could be something as simple as changing "mankind" to "humankind."

Cloutier says that living in the MVS house has "increased my spectrum of what service can be. It doesn't have to be my work at iFiT with MEN. It can be my interactions with children or going door-to-door to get to know my neighbors and have a conversation with them—that can be service too."—*Mayeken Kehr of Mennonite Mission Network*

Partners in your good work.

Rich Gerig
Principal

Becky Drumm
Principal

ADVANCEMENT
Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Consulting In
- Strategic Visioning
- Fundraising
- Capital Campaigns
- Enrollment

Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

Religious diversity at Virginia school

Eastern Mennonite Seminary admits more non-Mennonites than Mennonites.

For the second year in a row, Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS), Harrisonburg, Va., has admitted more students from other denominations than those who are Mennonite.

This year, EMS has admitted 22 new degree-seeking students and eight nondegree-seeking students at the Harrisonburg campus.

Three more degree-seeking students and one more nondegree-seeking student will enter at the EMS extension in Lancaster, Pa.

"Because we are approved to train United Methodist pastors," says Don A. Yoder, director of admissions, "we are seeing an increasing number take advantage of our location for their training."

Along with United Methodist and Mennonite students, this year's incoming class will include several Baptist, Episcopal and Church of the Brethren students. Two students are also international Mennonites coming from Brazil.

The sluggish economy is apparently a factor in the diverse mix of students coming to EMS this year.

"As the economy slows, people are not as ready to move to attend seminary," Yoder says. "Many of our students already live in the Shenandoah Valley."

"Some students are seeking us out because of our Anabaptist perspective on the world," says Sara Wenger Shenk, associate dean and associate professor of Christian practices. "We offer the perspective of a countercultural community deeply rooted in the narrative and life of Jesus."

Professors and students appreciate the diversity represented in the classrooms.

Barbara Seward, a nondenominational student from Harrisonburg who began seminary last year, says, "Learning about the different traditions has been rich. I have appreciated learning more about who Mennonites are and their history and heritage."

"There is no doubt that people from other faith traditions ask wonderful questions," says Shenk. "With such diverse perspectives in the classroom, we each see our own tradition in new ways and learn the strengths of our various denominations and the ways they complement and correct each other."—*Laura Lehman Amstutz of Eastern Mennonite Seminary*

Students are seeking us out because of our Anabaptist perspective on the world. —Sara Wenger Shenk

timely tip:
Practice bicycle safety!

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business. Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

Go ahead –
raise the roof

MMA
Stewardship Solutions

Building a ministry sometimes means new construction. Or maybe a refinanced loan at a lower rate could free more money for your ministry. Either way, we can help.

Check with MMA first if you're thinking about a construction loan, a standard first mortgage loan, or refinancing. You'll find competitive rates, experienced personnel – and no hassles. Plus, your lenders are fellow church members. Another good example of how MMA provides stewardship solutions to the Anabaptist community.

MMA's first mortgage church loan rates:

5-year adjustable rate	**6.25%***
3-year adjustable rate	**5.75%***
1-year adjustable rate	**5.00%***

For a free information kit, contact the church mortgage loan department at (800) 348-7468.

*Rates effective Aug. 1, 2008, and are subject to change on a monthly basis. There will be a 1 percent premium on construction loans during the construction period.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

CALENDAR

Hively Avenue Mennonite Church Anniversary: If you ever were a part of HAMC, Elkhart, Ind., please join us as we celebrate our 50th anniversary Oct. 4-5. For more information, visit www.mysite.verizon.net/hivelymenno. RSVP to 574-294-3423 or hivelymenno@verizon.net.

"Germantown: Gateway to North American Mennonite History" is the topic of a ***conference to be held Oct. 17-18*** at the historic **Mennonite meetinghouse at Germantown.** The conference commemorates the 300th anniversary of the formal organization of the Germantown church. For more information contact Christopher Friesen, program director, at the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust, 6133 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144; Email: programs@meetinghouse.info; Phone: 215-843-0943.

WORKERS

Belousek, Paula Snyder, ended a term as associate pastor at Prairie St. Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., on July 20.

Bowman, R. Todd, resigned June 30 as youth pastor at Chestnut Hill Mennonite Church, Columbia, Pa.

Brenneman, Nevin, was licensed as deacon at Hammer Creek Mennonite Church, Lititz, Pa., on June 22.

Hess, Ernest, ordained minister, began an assignment at Meserete Kristos College with MCC on Aug. 1.

Hurst, Moriah, was licensed at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on July 27 to serve as a pastor and Mennonite Mission Network service worker in Canberra, Australia.

Kaufmann, Lois, ended a term as pastor at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on July 31.

Kautz, Delbert L., pastor at Millersville (Pa.) Mennonite Church, graduated on May 31 from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lombard, Ill., with a Doctor of Ministry degree in worship studies.

Kurtz, Ira A., retired July 1 as lead pastor at Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Martin, Irvin L., retired June 30 as lead pastor at Gehman Mennonite Church, Adamstown, Pa.

Miller, J. Brian, was licensed for specific ministry as lead pastor at Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., on July 1.

Nguyen, Tuyen T., was ordained as lead pastor at Vietnamese Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, Pa., on June 15.

Rampogu, Victor, was licensed toward ordination and installed as church planter/pastor at United Christian Church, an outreach ministry of Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa., on July 27.

Ringler, Duane, was licensed as associate pastor at Bowmansville Mennonite Church, Bowmansville, Pa., on June 22.

Rutt, Leonard N., was licensed as associate pastor at Hammer Creek Mennonite Church, Lititz, Pa., on June 22.

Sensenig, Peter M., was licensed as associate pastor at Oxford Circle Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, Pa., on June 15.

Stoltzfus, Jeffrey, was licensed as associate pastor of young adult ministry at Zion Mennonite Church, Birdsboro, Pa., on April 13.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bricker, Jonathan Amos Wenger, July 13, to Matthew and Jamie Wenger Bricker, Coatesville, Pa.

Fairfield, Elisabeth Violet, June 13, to Peter and Bethany Versluis Fairfield, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hernley, Lyla Josephine, July 22, to Justin and Debbie Hernley, Scottdale, Pa.

Kauffman, Ezra Heatwole, June 3, to Ryan Kauffman and Christy Heatwole, Lancaster, Pa.

Kennell, Daniel Eoin, July 7, to Jeff and Laurel Trexler Kennell, Peoria, Ill.

Long, Eli William, July 25, to Dan and Melissa Tepke Long, Harrisonburg, Va.

Miglich, Karis Elaina, July 13, to Matt and Samantha Lehman Miglich, Canton, Ohio.

Nussbaum, Tristan Ray Trotter, July 30, to Brian and Trina Trotter Nussbaum, Harrisonburg, Va.

Ostlund, Noah Everett, July 24, to Jim and Jodi Rempel Ostlund, Sellersville, Pa.

Plummer, Nora Claire, July 23, to Nicholas Plummer and Jennifer Peifer, Durham, N.C.

Polen, Abigail Grace, July 11, to Jeff and Jodi Hershberger Polen, Apple Creek, Ohio.

Rempel, Madeleine Gascho, June 19, to Marc and Hannah Gascho Rempel, Corvallis, Ore.

Schmucker, Natalie Layne, July 3, to Todd and Stephanie Beck Schmucker, Archbold, Ohio.

Shreiner, Benjamin Cole, July 23, to Timothy and Cheryl Scheetz Shreiner, Harleysville, Pa.

Shrock, Brody Robert, July 28, to Shannon and Rebekah Ligas Shrock, Uniontown, Ohio.

Shue, Sommer Idell, May 24, to Tim and Jennifer Swartzendruber Shue, Kidron, Ohio.

Stauffer, Deziree Vondra, July 7, to Domonic and Michelle Wolfenbarger Stauffer, Milford, Neb.

Stevenson, Megan Marlene, July 28, to Matthew and Amanda Bokhart Stevenson, Indianapolis.

Wiechart, Caleb Douglas, May 14, to Phil and Krista Short Wiechart, Kidron, Ohio.

MARRIAGES

Adams/Miller: Victoria Adams, Elkhart, Ind., and Joshua Miller, Elkhart, July 26, at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Almaraz/Reyes: Enriquez Almaraz, Lima, Ohio, and Veneranda Reyes, Lima, May 17, at Fellowship Point, Berne, Ind.

Baker/Rodriguez: Derrick Baker, Bronx, N.Y., and Susana Rodriguez, Bronx, July 21, at North Bronx Mennonite Church.

Barnes/Beiler: Thadeus Barnes, Elkins, W.Va., and Charlotte Beiler, Paradise, Pa., July 19, at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

Sales: Insurance and financial services

Combine your professional skills and your Christian faith values

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

MMA, an established, church-related organization, is seeking sales professionals to provide insurance and financial solutions to one of the industry's most loyal markets.

MMA is a highly trusted organization serving individuals and businesses primarily associated with Mennonite and other Anabaptist-related denominations. Excellent income potential and generous benefits. To learn more, visit www.mma-online.org/careers. Fax or e-mail resume to (574) 537-6635 or hr@mma-online.org.

Dmitrovic/Janzen: Evica Dmitrovic, Ontario, and Christopher Janzen, Heidelberg, Ontario, July 20, in Burlington, Ontario.

Goertzen/Wiens: Tyler Goertzen, Hesston, Kan., and Brittany Wiens, Inman, Kan., July 19, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Goodridge/Southwick: Theodore Goodridge, Jr., Tulsa, Okla., and Erin Southwick, Soldotna, Alaska, July 19, at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Hershberger/Sweigart: Benjamin Hershberger, Topeka, Kan., and Jessica Sweigart, Wichita, Kan., May 24, at the bride's parents' home in Hesston, Kan.

Hoober/Leichty: Kristen Hoober, Goshen, Ind., and Mark Leichty, Ames, Iowa, July 26, at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Janzen/Pankratz: Nick Janzen, Hesston, Kan., and Whitney Pankratz, Hesston, July 26, at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Miller/Yoder: Jacob Miller, Lakewood, Colo., and Chelsey Yoder, Cairo, Neb., June 7, at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, Divide, Colo.

Nissley/Stahl: Clayton R. Nissley, Manheim, Pa., and Martha Stahl, Lititz, Pa., May 17, at West Bethany Chapel at Landis Homes, Lititz.

Orr/Ridenour: Sarah Orr, Lincoln, Neb., and Cody Ridenour, Waynesfield, Ohio, July 19, at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Penner/Yang: Elijah Penner, Reedley, Calif., and Sina Yang, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, July 5, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Royston/Schrag: Matt Royston, Newton, Kan., and Rhiannon Schrag, Hesston, Kan., June 7, at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Slabaugh/Yoder: Norman Slabaugh, Apple Creek, Ohio, and Leona Yoder, Hartville, Ohio, July 12, at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Hartville.

DEATHS

Balzer, Ruth Josephine Mosiman, 91, Whitewater, Kan., died July 10. Spouse: Waldo I. Balzer. Parents: Fred and Mary Ingold Mosiman. Children: Mike, Janet Franz, Larry Joe; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 14 at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater.

Boettger, Edith Yoder, 86, Tofield, Alberta, died May 27. Spouse: Marvin Boettger. Parents: David L. and Lucinda Stauffer Yoder. Children: Derril, Elwood, Jerry; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 31 at Salem Mennonite Church, Tofield.

Conrad, Paul L., 89, Goshen, Ind., died July 17. Spouse: Nancy Hernley Conrad. Parents: Lester and Mabel Geiger Conrad. Children: Glenn, Mary Conrad Lo, Paul II, John; six grandchildren. Funeral: July 20 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Doerksen, Terry L., 75, Inman, Kan., died July 28. Spouse: Lois Doerksen. Parents: Pete R. and Nettie S. Neufeld Doerksen. Children: Kim Pankratz, Kelly; nine grandchildren. Funeral: July 31 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Frey, Katherine Eicher, 88, Archbold, Ohio, died July 19. Spouse: Elias Frey (deceased). Parents: Peter and Emma Nofziger Eicher. Children: Robert, Ronald, Roger, "Suz" Wirick, Mary Wyse, Jane Thomson, Sandra Frey-Stegman, Rebecca VanHorn, Patricia Frey; 15 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 22 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Garber, Matthew Robert, 22, Elizabethtown, Pa., died July 1 in an accidental drowning in Costa Rica. Parents: J. Todd and Debbie L. Greider Garber. Siblings: Justin, Bradley, Janelle. Memorial service: July 13 at Elizabethtown High School.

Goertz, Henry Arnold, 59, Bristol, Ind., died June 28 of cancer. Spouse: Alice Miller Goertz. Parents: Ernest and Elma Goertz. Children: Jeremiah, Marvin, Isaiah; two grandchildren. Funeral: July 6 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Herr, Sara Graybill, 100, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 18. Spouse: E. Grant Herr (deceased). Parents: Clayton and Bertha Shelley Graybill. Children: Kenneth D., Lowell G.; four grandchildren; three greatgranchildren. Funeral: July 31 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Marner, Walther Francis, 97, Denver Colo. and Glendale, Ariz., died April 21. Spouse: Amelia "Jo" Kathryn Troyer Marner (deceased). Parents: Gideon and Fannie Miller Marner. Children: Gary, Lowell, Kay Moser, Randy; 10 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at Glencroft, Glendale.

Miller, Lala May Hochstetler, 91, Goshen, Ind., died June 27. Spouse: Marner Miller (deceased). Parents: Christian H. and Magdalena Shetler Hochstetler. Children: Shirley Miller, Larry, Ruth Ann Miller Brunk, Marlin; 12 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: July 1 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Rheinheimer, Floyd LaVerne, 86, Goshen, Ind., died July 7. Spouse: Irene Miller Rheinheimer. Parents: Edward and Laura Reinhardt Rheinheimer. Children: Faye Gonzalez, Anita Yoder, Lowell, Roger, Douglas; 15 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 10 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Riegsecker, Jesse W., 90, Middlebury, Ind., died July 14 of cancer. Spouse: Agnes Miller Riegsecker. Parents: John and Neomah Miller Riegsecker. Children: Rebecca Lee, John, Joseph, Jerry; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 18 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Short, Rollin J., 80, Archobld, Ohio, died July 25 of a heart attack. Spouse: Lois Wagler Short. Parents: Raymond H. and Elizabeth Short Short. Children: Rhonda Stuckey, Andrew, Steven, Jan Short Litogot, Sue O'Riley, Lisa Smith; 16 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Memorial service at a later date.

Wiebe, Marie Jeanette Crapuchettes, 74, Whitewater, Kan., died July 11 of cancer. Spouse: Kenneth Wiebe. Parents: Eugene and Einifred Kopp Crapuchettes. Children: Matt, Heidi Wiebe, Margo Franz, Bekkey Yoder; five grandchildren. Funeral: July 19 at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

AMBS

Oct. 8 Advent Planner

Let your face shine!

Explore ideas for prayers, dramatic readings, children's time, and music and visual elements for the Advent season. *Presenters: Rosanna McFadden, Marlene Kropf and Rebecca Slough*

Hosted by the Church Leadership Center at ***Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary****, Elkhart Ind. Visit* ***www.ambs.edu/workshops*** *or call* ***574.296.6269*** *for details and registration.*

The Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio, located in Bluffton, Ohio, seeks a ***CEO*** to lead its 16-acre campus with independent housing, assisted living and a 92-bed health-care facility. Qualified candidates should have senior leadership experience in large organizations, strong financial knowledge, ability to develop a productive work culture consistent with organizational values, board experience and a passion for the organization's mission. Interested candidates should contact Kim Allen with MHS Alliance at Kim@StiffneyGroup.com or 574-537-8736.

Ski youth retreat package, **Timberline Four Seasons Resort, W.Va.**, starting at $99 a night plus tax. Includes lodging, meals, lifts, skis, lesson. Info: www.timberlineresort.com; 800-392-0152. West Virginia Wild and Wonderful.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary invites ***pastors to apply for funded sabbaticals*** for up to nine weeks on the AMBS campus. Funding covers housing, provides a stipend and allows pastors to participate in campus events, meet with professors and receive spiritual direction. Participants pursue a writing project of their choice. AMBS especially seeks applications from pastors who serve congregations that are racially and ethnically diverse. Applications for fall 2009 are due on Sept. 5, 2008. Information and application forms are available at www.ambs.edu/pastorsabbatical or by sending a message to churchleadership@ambs.edu or calling the AMBS Church Leadership Center office at 574-296-6269.

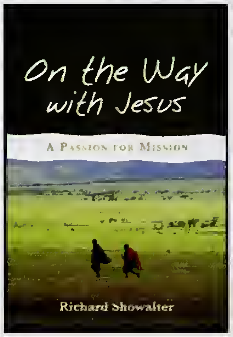
Fransen Family Foundation is accepting applications from 501(c)3 organizations for ***micro-grants***. See details at fransenfamilyfoundation.org. Submission deadline extended until Sept. 8, 2008.

Coming to **Montreal** for school or vacation? Support a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada project while enjoying Montreal's trendy "Plateau" district by staying at ***Maison de l'amitié Summer Guestrooms and Student residence***. Student housing available for September. 514-843-4356, www.residencema.ca reservations@maisondelamitie.ca.

Full-time director of culinary services. Job summary: provide leadership and oversight for food service operations for multiple service locations on the **Greencroft** campus. Responsible for the management of all aspects of food services programs and delivery. Job requirements/qualifications: Bachelor's degree in restaurant and hospitality, culinary arts or related field; five or more years management experience; five or more years food service experience; strong interpersonal skills; strong written and verbal skills; flexibility and creativity; self-directed. Compensation and schedule: MO7 Salary based on experience; full-time first shift (occasional weekend and holiday hours may be required). Benefits: full-time benefit package including health, dental insurance and retirement plan. Applications: Apply online at www.greencroft.org or at Greencroft Healthcare South, 1225 Greencroft Drive, Goshen, IN 46527-0819. Contact Greencroft Human Resources at 574-537-4084 with questions.

Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College, Wolflake, Ind., is a nature preserve known for its wetlands and its theological reflection on earthkeeping. ***Register now for: Beyond the Front Porch: Finding Our Place in Nature, Sept. 19-21; Nature Photography Workshop, Oct. 9-12***. See www.goshen.edu/merrylea, call 260-799-5869 or email jenniferhs@goshen.edu.

Herald Press: Mission and Renewal



On the Way with Jesus: A Passion for Mission
Richard Showalter's lifetime passion as been the church's mission to enlarge the body of Christ. Showalter explores the multiple dimensions of Christian mission, offering pointed challenges to mission engagement and encouraging the church to enter more fully into its mission.

"A hopeful and accessible overview of the mission of God in His world, through His people, in our time."
—*Jonathan J. Bonk, Overseas Ministries Study Center*

Paper, 150 pages, $16.99

Springs of Living Water
Christ-Centered Church Renewal
David S. Young
Foreword by Richard Foster

Springs of Living Water: Christ-Centered Church Renewal
David S. Young presents a practical process for church renewal. Using a servant leader style and a spiritual emphasis, Young provides congregations with the keys to revitalization. His unique seven-step model helps churches identify their strengths and build upon them. Congregations discover new life and find renewed urgency to their mission.

Paper, 390 pages, $16.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

Volunteer host and hostess needed at **Menno-Hof** for a three-month to one-year term beginning Oct. 1, 2008. Furnished one-bedroom apartment, groceries and small stipend provided. For more information, contact Joseph Yoder, P.O. Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 45665; 260/768-4117 or jyoder@mennohof.org.

Intensive English Program (IEP): Expand your world; teach in Lithuania. **LCC International University** seeks ***English language teachers*** to teach in our new Intensive English Program (IEP). Applicants should have ESL or English teaching experience and an MA degree in education, applied linguistics or English. Eager college-bound students come from seven different countries. We provide housing, travel stipend, curriculum materials, resources, orientation and a supportive Christian environment and much more. Contact Cathy Bauer opportunities@lcc.lt or check our Web site: www.lcc.lt.

English conversation teachers needed. Connexus, a **Korea Anabaptist Center** ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Associate pastor for youth ministry, half-time position. Growing congregation, Rocky Mountains. For details contact Bruce Kuhns, 719-596-1718. **Beth-El Mennonite Church** in Colorado Springs, CO.

Is God calling you to use your leadership, management skills and experiences to serve others through **Mennonite Central Committee** (MCC)? ***Leaders urgently needed for MCC programs***. Please visit MCC's Web site at mcc.org/serve to read complete job descriptions. Contact Becky Stahly at 717-859-1151 or rss@mcc.org if you are interested in any of the following leadership positions.

Africa: MCC Representative for Democratic Republic of Congo, Kinshasa (09/08); Associate Director for Central/West Africa, Abuja, Nigeria (available now); Coordinator—MCC Regional Peace Network (East Africa), Kampala, Uganda, or Nairobi, Kenya (available now).

Europe/Middle East: MCC Representative for the Former Soviet Union, Zaporozhye, Ukraine (06/09); MCC Representative for Lebanon/Syria, Beirut (06/09).

Latin America: MCC Representative for Brazil, Recife (08/09); MCC Representative for Haiti, Port-au-Prince (available now); Associate Director for South America, likely in Curitiba, Brazil (01/09).

International program: Director of Program Development, Akron, Pa. or Winnipeg, Manitoba. Key responsibilities include supervision and direction to International Program Department's program development and strategic planning process (11/08).

Ridgeview Mennonite Church, a Mennonite Church USA/Atlantic Coast Conference congregation located in Intercourse, Pa., is searching for a ***one-half to full-time person to serve as a pastoral team member*** focusing in youth and young adult ministry. For more information and a ministry description, please contact Ridgeview Mennonite Church at ridgeviewchurch@frontiernet.net or call 717-768-3143.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"As a Bible professor and director of peace and conflict studies at Bluffton University, I have the opportunity to emphasize and live out in the classroom the Mennonite values of close attention to scripture and nonviolent action. I love reading the Bible with students and thinking about how Jesus' teachings ask all of his disciples to be peacemakers. It is exciting to see students take Jesus' call seriously for their own lives as they are making decisions about what sorts of people they will be in the world."

– Laura Brenneman, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion and director of peace and conflict studies

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

'It is what it is'

Gordon Houser

The six of us sat on the wooden dock in the hot sun, waiting for a water taxi to take us north to meet some friends of our hosts. The taxi was due to arrive at 5 p.m., and it was now 5:10.

We chatted, and I wondered aloud if maybe they forgot. Wayne, one of our hosts, said, "They'll come sometime."

I reminded myself this was Belize, where people say, "It is what it is." The taxi showed up, and we were on our way, sans life jackets or railings on the boat. No OSHA here.

Jeanne and I came here in late June with four good friends. Two of them owned a condo on the beach on Abergris Caye, an island off the coast of the Belize mainland. We spent 10 days relaxing, reading, talking, seeing some sites, meeting new people, eating good seafood (snapper, grouper, coconut shrimp), enjoying the relaxed pace of life.

I was in the midst of a three-month sabbatical that this magazine graciously provided me, and while I spent much of it reading and writing (including some during my days in Belize), this time in another country and culture provided a helpful perspective.

A month earlier I had read the book *In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed* by Carl Honoré (HarperOne, 2005) and wrote about the need to practice patience in our fast-paced culture. In Belize I was able to experience a different pace, and I realized in a greater way how the surrounding culture affects our behavior and expectations.

Our cell phones didn't work there, we didn't have access to email and didn't watch TV. We made plans and went places, but we didn't have to be there at a certain time. If we were meeting someone for dinner at 6 p.m., that meant between 6 and 7 in Belize time.

This experience fit with Honoré's book, which describes our addiction to speed and the growing slow movement that tries to address it. He writes about "time-sickness" and "the age of rage."

In Belize no one seemed to be in a hurry. Transportation beyond walking was by bicycle or golf cart, with a few exceptions. And the pothole-filled roads slowed down what traffic there was. The roads also had thick ropes laid across them in places. I asked Wayne about these. "Speed bumps," he explained. I laughed. Unnecessary.

I could feel my body relax the longer we were there, which made me realize the tension I lived with normally. (And I live in Newton, Kan., not New York City.) I lay on the sandy beach at times under a palm tree, looking out over the ocean, watching the frigate birds, gulls and pelicans wafting over the water. (I realize this sounds like a beer commercial.) It seemed easier to release control of the world's (and my) problems to God.

I realize I was there comfortably as a relatively wealthy American, but the Belizeans I met seemed to have this relaxed attitude as well. They knew what I needed to learn (and what I was writing about in my sabbatical project): We are not in control. It is what it is.

One afternoon, when we went snorkeling, the electricity went off for three hours. The local electric company just turned it off, to save power, I imagine. Jeanne asked Pam, "What if you were baking a cake at the time?" Pam said, "You just deal with it. It is what it is."

Our culture pushes in the direction of acting as if we are in charge, in the direction of haste, of finding the quick solution, in the direction of getting things done, no matter what means are required. The gospel calls us to turn away from that direction, to slow down and wait for God, who is in charge, to act.

Such patience is a central virtue and concept in Mennonite spirituality. Behind patience lies the theological truth, the belief, that our life—all life—is a gift of God and that we are not in charge. To live ungratefully and act as if we are in charge, as if everything depends on us, is to be, among other things, impatient. We need to learn from Belizeans how to accept what is and wait.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

BOOKS

Two recent novels come from Christian writers who have made their mark in literary circles and explore Christian themes in powerful ways. **The Plague of Doves** by Louise Erdrich (HarperCollins, 2008, $25.95) reflects on the effects of an event in 1911 near the town of Pluto, N.D. In her 11 novels, Erdrich creates a world where Native and white intertwine—love and sometimes clash. This is one of her best. **Exiles** by Ron Hansen (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008, $23) imagines the lives of five nuns who died one cold night in December 1875, when a German steamship ran aground in England, and of the famed Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, who wrote "The Wreck of the Deutschland." He paints both sets of characters as exiles in their different ways as they struggle to follow their vocations.

FILMS

The Dark Knight (PG-13) is this summer's most popular film. It raises ethical questions about revenge, the value of life and violent means to ends. In several scenes, the victims of torture are confused with the torturers, challenging the way people accuse others of terrorism. The main source of terror, the eerie and grotesque Joker, is played by the late Heath Ledger. The film presents the predicament how to respond when a loved one is harmed. But most viewers will ignore these questions and find themselves caught up in the loud, fast fight scenes that seem to never end.—*Anna Groff*

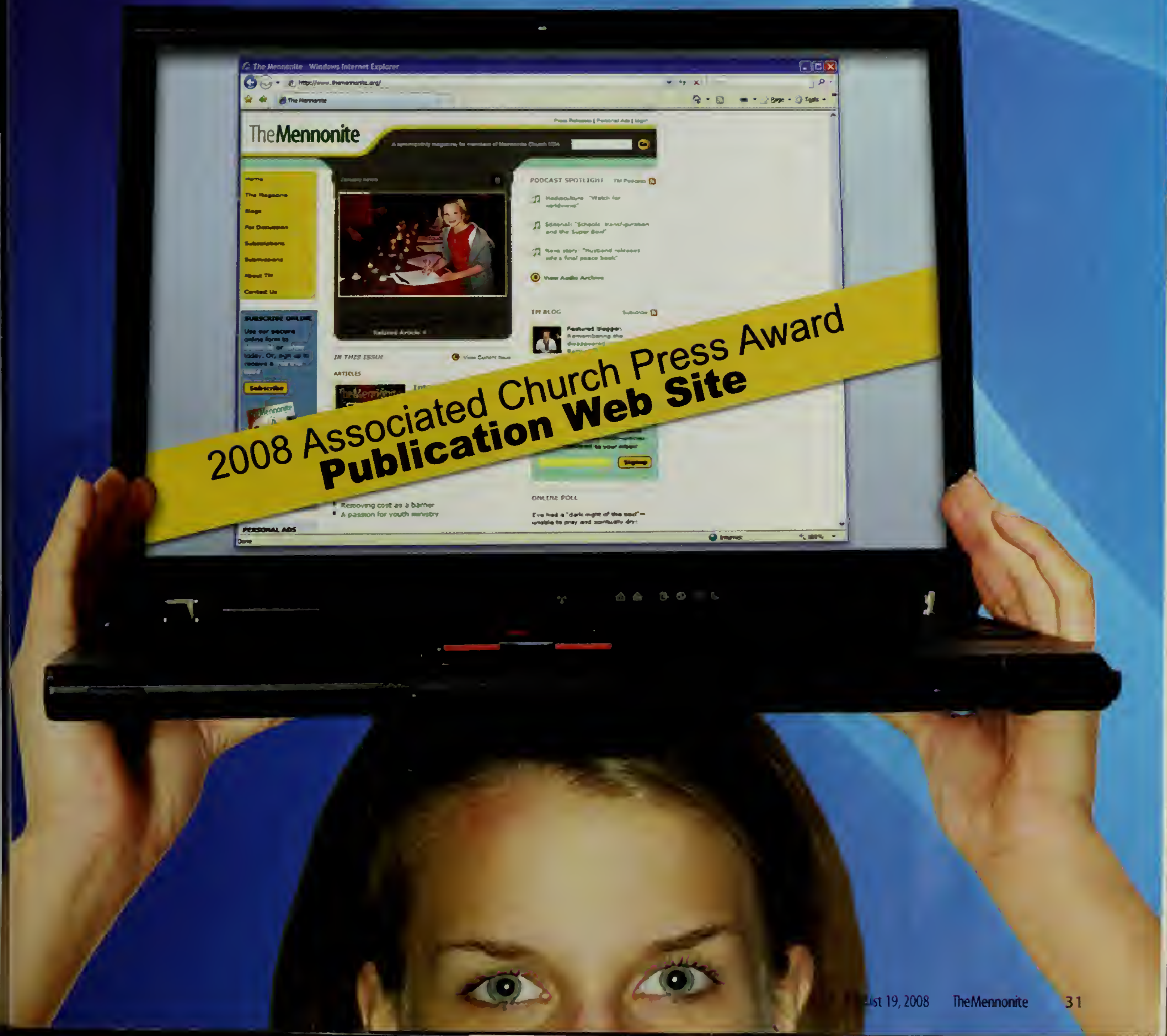
WALL-E (G) is a delightful yet disturbing animated film, set in the distant future, about a small waste-collecting robot that inadvertently embarks on a space journey that will ultimately decide the fate of mankind.—*gh*

Make this your homepage

Make **www.themennonite.org** your homepage and get the latest news, photos, press releases and blog updates right away.

Since we post photos and news releases from all the schools, agencies and conferences, **www.themennonite.org** offers the most comprehensive news coverage available for Mennonite Church USA.

You can also answer poll questions, subscribe to RSS feeds and view videos.


TheMennonite
PODCAST SPOTLIGHT
TM BLOG
IN THIS ISSUE
ARTICLES
ONLINE POLL
PERSONAL ADS
2008 Associated Church Press Award
Publication Web Site

*************************************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 888 15-DEC-09 66994 S33 P5
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

It starts with Sunday school

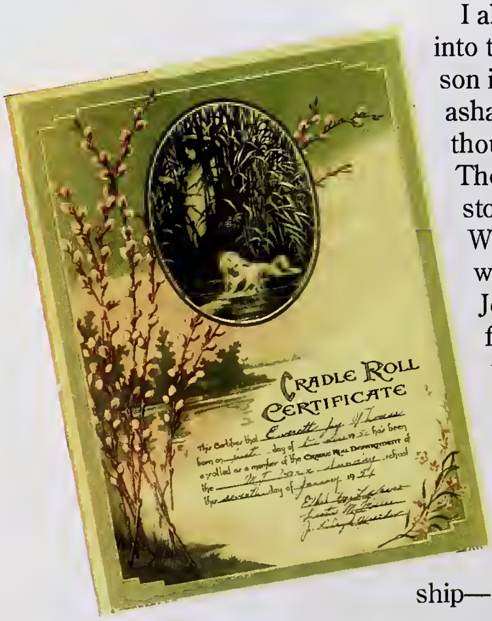
Everett J. Thomas

The venerable institution of Sunday school holds an important place in congregational life.

To continue growing in faith really does require more than Sunday school, as the title of our cover story says. But Sunday school is the framework onto which other important practices and spiritual disciplines can be added.

Apparently I was enrolled in Sunday school on my first day in church; I was a month old. An elaborately engraved certificate (see below)—discovered in a box of momentos my mother saved—records the occasion. The certificate reminded me how intentional our church has been about teaching the Bible to children and inculcating beliefs and practices we consider important. It also reminded me that I have been attending Sunday school—with a few years off during college and in my 20s—for more than half a century.

My earliest memory of Sunday school was a lesson from Exodus 12: the first Passover, when the angel of the Lord visited the households in Egypt and killed many firstborn children. But I took the story in a direction other than the one our teacher intended. I was intrigued by this business of killing firstborns and fantasized about something like that happening again: My father was a firstborn, my mother was a firstborn, and my older brother was a firstborn. If the angel of death came to my house, I would be in charge.



CRADLE ROLL CERTIFICATE

I also remember breaking into tears during one Bible lesson in the third-grade class—ashamed of my tears even though I could not stop them. The lesson was about the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7. When I realized Stephen was killed because he loved Jesus, I started crying. My father, who was our teacher, dismissed the other children and patiently waited with me as I sobbed.

Over the past few years in our congregation, the hour after worship—now called Christian education—has held a variety of faith-shaping experiences. For several years my wife, Barbara, and I helped with a special worship experience designed for college students. These days, while our congregation is in a transition between lead pastors, that hour now involves listening to "teaching sessions" led by the transition minister.

The Christian education hour can offer many experiences. A creative congregation does well to let the needs of adults—at different life stages—determine how the time is spent. For example, some young adult parents find it most helpful to have a "life experiences class"—the name one group gave to their coffee time together in the fellowship hall to talk about anything.

As I grow older, I am drawn back to the structure and thoroughness of the *Adult Bible Study* curriculum. Each time we come to Exodus 12, the Passover story has meanings far more profound than it did when I first heard it.

There are other elements in spiritual formation beyond Christian education. I squeezed three years of seminary studies into 20 years and eventually received the M.Div. degree. Using an ancient spiritual growth tool—called the "enneagram"—was important for a life stage in my late 40s. Spiritual direction has been helpful at times.

But Sunday school is about biblical literacy and the opportunity for interpretation in a hermeneutical community. If an adult Sunday school class is not growing, one or both of these dimensions is probably missing. Adults who assume they know everything they need to know about the Bible will not value additional literacy. This is unfortunate, since our Anabaptist tradition is based on the gathered church being the hermeneutical community—Christians blessed by God to examine, pray over and "rightly divide the Word," to use Paul's language in 2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV).

Because the venerable institution of Sunday school still holds such an important place in congregational life, we asked two leaders to write about it. We hope their articles (pages 8 and 12) will help you and your congregation reinforce the need for regular Christian education for everyone—from the cradle on.—*ejt*

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

TheMennonite

www.TheMennonite.org
September 2, 2008

let the light of Christ Jesus shine through

Page 8

12 How does Revelation speak today?
16 A house added to others
18 A poisonous brew
32 Story power

The dawn will come

Ron Adams is pastor at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

I rarely remember my dreams. I wake up and they dissolve quickly. But when I do remember one, it stays with me.

In one dream, I am sitting in a car. There is someone with me, but I cannot say who. It is night. The road is deserted. It is a country road, in the middle of nowhere. I hear crickets. My companion and I seem to be waiting.

While we wait, we talk—about our need to get to our destination, about not being able to get there, about other things I cannot recall.

It seems there are miles to go. I don't know why we are stopped. Perhaps we ran out of gasoline. Perhaps it is just one of those inexplicable things that happen in dreams. No matter. We sit in the car and wonder when we'll ever arrive. So many miles to go.

Many of the dreams I remember are what I call anxiety dreams. The classic is one left over from seminary days. The semester is over, and I suddenly realize I've not attended a particular class at all, that I've skipped the whole semester. Now it is finals time, and I am doomed to fail.

More recently, I have dreamt that it is Sunday morning. I need to be at church to preach the sermon. But everything conspires against my getting there on time. I can't find my car keys, I can't find the sermon, my shoes are missing.

These are dreams I leave gratefully. I wake up and offer thanks that it was only a bad dream.

The dream I'm telling you about fits the anxiety dream model, with my needing to be somewhere and not being able to do so. But I don't recall feeling that familiar anxiety. I don't recall rushing around frantically or expressing frustration with my companion. We sit in the car and wait.

Dawn finally arrives. And, with all the logic of a dream, our car starts, and off we go. And lo and behold, our destination is just around the next corner. It is not miles and miles away. We start the car and drive a short distance, and there we are. What we were seeking is right there in front of us, just beyond the bend, not far away at all.

Then I awake and remember. But I feel no relief. If anything, I feel a sadness not unlike nostalgia, that feeling we get when we remember a good moment or a good place or a good event from the past—warm and melancholy all at once. That's the feeling I have when I wake up. It's like I've been somewhere good and missed it from the moment I left.

Our life in Christ is a life filled with waiting. We don't sit on our hands or our laurels. We work and worship. We do our part in sharing the hope we have within us. We proclaim the Lord's death and resurrection. We do all the things disciples have done since the church began.

And one of those things is waiting—for the fulfillment of the gospel promise, for Christ to return, for the redeeming of the whole creation, for the work begun on the cross to come to its completion. Our life in Christ is filled with waiting—for something we know already in part and just enough to make us long for more.

But sometimes it seems our waiting will never end. Sometimes it seems our destination is miles away. Sometimes we may wonder if our hope is no more solid than air. Sometimes we may feel like we are driving toward a goal we'll never reach.

But the dawn will come. And we will discover that what we've dreamed about, what we've longed for, what we've hoped for against every hope, is right there before us. It was there all along. Just around the next bend.

On that day we will awaken from our dream of waiting and be glad. TM

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 17, September 2, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

SEP 3 08

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

6

7

22

11

8 **Let the light of Christ Jesus shine through**
The secret to longevity in pastoral ministry—*John F. Murray*

12 **How does Revelation speak today?**
Revelation is about Jesus, not vengeance.—*Ted Grimsrud*

15 **Car story**
A business transaction in the Third Way—*Marilyn Miller*

16 **A house added to others**
The church is a footnote to following Jesus.—*Stanley W. Green*

19 **Focus groups want health-care access**
Proposed plan for health-care access for all pastors goes to Executive Board.—*Gordon Houser*

20 **Iraqis recall war horrors in Baghdad**

21 **Colombians ask MWC to support efforts**

22 **Seeds planted in Senegalese hearts, fields**

24 **Wedding plans with the earth in mind**
Three couples use alternative gift registries, favors and make donations.—*Anna Groff*

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Grace and truth**
The dawn will come—*Ron W. Adams*

4 **Readers say**

6 **News digest**

18 **Speaking out**
A poisonous brew—*Berry Friesen*

26 **For the record**

30 **Real families**
Training for the Olympics—*Sara Wenger Shenk*

32 **Editorial**
Story power—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Photo illustration using Dreamstime.com images

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Forgiveness as conundrum

"Forgiveness as a Conundrum" (Aug. 5) by Marlin Birkey resurrected some old thoughts I've had about justice. "Justice" is a word that somehow resembles "judgment"—people getting what they deserve, fair and square. According to Romans 3, though, God's definition of justice must be different from mine. It certainly doesn't seem fair. It seems most unfair. Unfairly good.

Romans 3:25 says that God demonstrated his justice by giving his son as a sacrifice. That certainly doesn't fit my definition of justice. How is it "fair" that God needed to send his son to die? Who is God demonstrating his justice to, anyway? He certainly doesn't need to prove it to me.

I'm reminded of the scene from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* in which the White Witch comes before Aslan to assert her authority over Edmund, saying, "You have a traitor in your midst, Aslan. You will remember well that every traitor belongs to me. His blood is my property."

Perhaps God, like Aslan with the White Witch, is demonstrating his justice to the evil, accusing authorities in the spiritual realm who are hissing that he must follow the rules. God demonstrates his justice by sending his own son as a sacrifice. With this one action God both follows the rules and radiates his unfair goodness and compassion toward mankind at the same time.—*Marita Scholtz, Baltimore*

Atonement is cleansing of sin

Marlin Birkey ("Forgiveness as a Conundrum," Aug. 5) has put his finger on a perennial problem: how to square the teaching and ministry of Jesus—which offers forgiveness of sin with the authority of God but without precondition for the sinner—and the popular theology of the cross that depicts Christ's death as final satisfaction of God's demand for just payment for human sin (the "penal substitution" theory). If God forgives only on the precondition that Christ has paid for sin by his death on the cross in place of sinners, then can it really be called forgiveness, which entails remission of debt rather than payment?

Birkey notes, correctly, that the New Testament speaks of Jesus' death as "the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 2:2, 4:10). However, Birkey's conundrum is premised on a false assumption. He assumes that to say Jesus' death was an "atoning sacrifice" is to say that it was a payment to God to satisfy debt for sin—which assumes, further, that the sacrifices of atonement functioned according to the logic of retribution. If that were so, then we would expect the sacrifices to be both directed toward God and "proportional" to the gravity of the sin. Yet careful study of Leviticus does not bear out either of these implications. The sacrifices are never directed toward God for God's satisfaction but always toward sin on behalf of the sinner and vary not according to the sin but according to the sinner. The conundrum results from force-fitting both sacrifice and the cross into the straitjacket of retributive justice.

I agree with Birkey when he writes, "I'm not ready to dismiss the notion of sacrificial atonement from my theological understanding of forgiveness." What is needed is a properly biblical understanding of sacrificial atonement. The biblical terms for sacrificial atonement, in both Hebrew and Greek, are better understood as cleansing of sin rather than payment to God.—*Darrin W. Snyder Belousek, Raleigh, N.C.*

Jesus forgives, God takes the loss

Thanks to Marlin Birkey for "Forgiveness as a Conundrum" (Aug. 5). It is essential that we grapple with such issues if we expect to be able to tell others what God has done for the world through Jesus. I might quibble with one assumption, however. When Birkey writes, "If our debt has been paid, then it hasn't been forgiven," he seems to suggest that it is inconsistent to say both that Jesus paid for our sins and that Jesus forgave our sins. To illustrate: Suppose your negligence caused me a loss of $100. If you repay me for the loss, there is no need for forgiveness. If I forgive you, there is no need for payment. However, to assume that if I forgive you no one "paid" for the loss is not entirely true. By forgiving you I take a $100 loss. I paid for the loss myself. In other words, in forgiving you I "pay myself" for the loss.

IN THIS ISSUE

As Christians we are called to follow Jesus and to act, as best we can, in concert with the action of God's Spirit in the world. John F. Murray (page 8) reflects on what makes for longevity in pastoral ministry. Part of that is being God-centered, as were the Major Prophets. Ted Grimsrud looks at misconceptions about the book of Revelation (page 12) and how it is relevant to us today. Marilyn Miller (page 15) relates a story about a business transaction that reflects a different way of doing business. Stanley Green (page 16) writes that "the essence of a missional vision is to align with the purposes of God" and not to make the church an end in itself. A proposed plan for health-care access for all pastors in Mennonite Church USA will be brought to the Executive Board later this month (page 19). And Everett Thomas writes about the power of story to shape our actions (page 32).
—*Associate editor*

It may take better minds than mine to explain this in atonement theory, but I no longer struggle with it as I once did. Through my Trinitarian lenses, when God's created intention is violated and Jesus forgives, God takes the loss. And Jesus' crucifixion and death become the visual and historic reality of God's forgiveness through God's "self-payment" for my sin.—*Kurt Horst, Somerset, Pa.*

With a light from above

B. Elaine Bryant spoke a great truth regarding living together with diverse Christians and a diverse society ("Guide Her With a Light from Above," Aug. 5). The words of Jesus, about "treating others the way we want to be treated" sums up a key idea that God has for us homo sapiens. I want to be treated mercifully and kindly when I say or do things others do not agree with. Therefore, I pray that the God of heaven and earth will help me speak and act kindly to those who espouse religious, philosophical and political ideas I abhor. The golden rule is a wonderful and grace-filled guiding light.—*John Otto, Newton, Kan.*

Make it affordable to care

While Glenn Miller's article on health care and the 2008 election ("Who Me, Advocate for Health Care?" July 22) provides a valuable overview of this issue for voters, it is clear to those of us in the health-care field that we must ask our presidential candidates another question: How can they ensure that all individuals receive the long-term care services they need at a price they can afford?

Millions of us face family and financial strains when we or someone we love needs long-term care. Despite individuals' considerable efforts and substantial public expenditures, many are still left struggling with unmet needs and catastrophic costs. It is simply unaffordable to care. What our country needs is a national insurance trust whose premiums provide cash benefits to pay for long-term-care expenses. When we are well, we would pay regular premiums just as we now do for care or health insurance. When we need help, we could receive cash benefits to hire an aide, pay a family member who misses work to help us or order groceries. Such a plan would give us more choice and control over our lives. We must make it affordable to care.—*Tom Akins, Topeka, Kan.*

Mennonite Church USA restructuring

I read with interest the various articles, editorials and letters regarding the Executive Board's restructuring proposal. There have been numerous comments regarding the proposal's "centralization of power." I question whether some agencies and/or their staff have assumed too much power. I also question whether we have too many chief executive officers (CEOs).

My solution is severalfold. First, I don't believe MMA should be an agency. It is not the same kind of entity as the others. Government insurance regulations, reporting and relationships with other denominations make this organization different from our other agencies.

Second, I would change the title of "Agency CEO" to "Assistant Director" and make the position accountable to the Executive Director.

Third, I would form a personnel committee accountable to the Executive Board that handles employment for all agencies. Employees of agencies would be accountable to the Assistant Directors. This would create one pay scale as opposed to the different and unequal pay scales currently observed by our agencies.

Fourth, I would leave the agency boards the way they are. However, I could be convinced to reduce the size of each board by one or two.

None of these suggestions will make for a more faithful church or put more people in the pews. But it would defuse some of the in-house competition and allow more time for the boards to work on being a missional church together.—*Cleon Claassen, Moses Lake, Wash.*

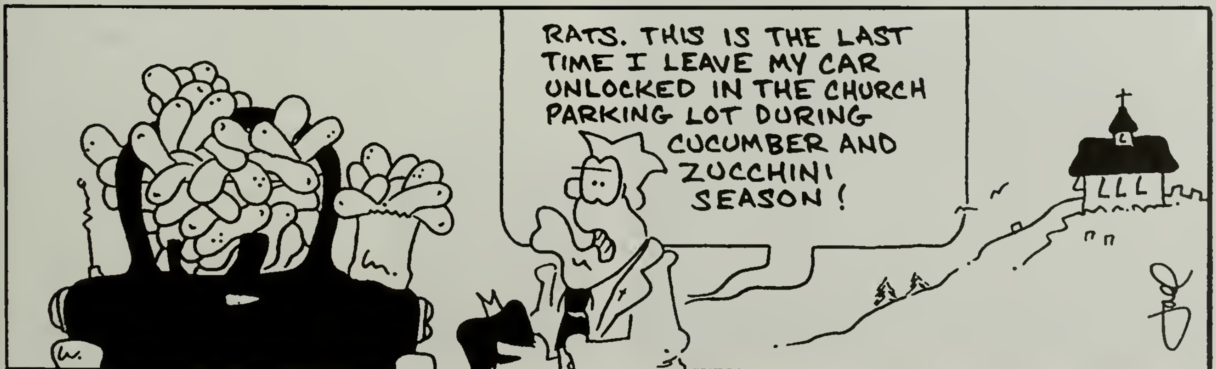
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Media coverage of the Olympics changed my impression of China (37 votes):

○ Positively (24%)
○ Negatively (11%)
○ No change (65%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


RATS. THIS IS THE LAST TIME I LEAVE MY CAR UNLOCKED IN THE CHURCH PARKING LOT DURING CUCUMBER AND ZUCCHINI SEASON!

IN BRIEF

Goshen giving surpasses goal

Goshen (Ind.) College reports that annual giving for the 2007-08 fiscal year reached a 15-year high. William A. Jones, vice president of institutional advancement, says the increased level of giving will help the college pay for urgent needs. After four years of decline, the percent of alumni who gave increased in 2007-08, from 25.9 percent to 26.7 percent. There were 4,459 alumni who gave a total of $3,780,650, which is $1,078,171 more than last year. Overall giving to the college totaled $5,146,285 in contributions. This total includes the GC Fund as well as gifts for specific purposes or the endowment. —*Goshen College*

Hesston magazine wins award

Hesston (Kan.) College has received an APEX 2008 Award of Excellence for work on the college's alumni magazine. Phil Richard, editor, says the winning Fall 2007 issue of *Hesston College Today* focused on the college's well-known nursing program. *Hesston College Today* is a 20-page magazine published three times a year. APEX 2008 is an international competition that recognizes outstanding publications from newsletters and magazines to annual reports, brochures and Web sites. —*Hesston College*

Mediation for Lancaster Conference bishops

LANCASTER, Pa.—Linford King, bishop for the Lancaster city district of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC) ordained two women in the churches he oversees in 2007 and 2008, even though conference policy did not allow for the ordination of women at that time. Consequently, the conference's bishop board felt compelled to deal with King because he "broke covenant" with the bishop board, although he was following his conscience and the convictions of some Lancaster district churches. To address this dilemma, the board hired mediators Marcus Smucker and David Brubaker to lead several conversations with King. The bishop board heard King describe the pain he experienced as he attempted to honor conflicting faith communities. King heard the bishops describe how they experienced King's actions, including the pain those actions caused in some parts of the conference.

As a result of the mediation, King acknowledged that he acted contrary to conference policy, and the bishop board acknowledged a failure to communicate in a helpful and timely manner about the matters. King and all the bishops committed to heed the counsel of the bishop board in the future. King also agreed to a two-year period of accountability, with two other bishops meeting regularly with King. The bishop board also committed itself to open dialogue around views of authority in LMC.—*Lancaster Conference News*

Tim Shenk

MCC launches three-year response to Myanmar

U Kala plows a neighbor's rice field in Kungyangon Township, Myanmar, with a power tiller provided by IDE-Myanmar, a Mennonite Central Committee partner organization. MCC plans to provide more than $1.1 million in aid over three years to help people recover from Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar.—*MCC*

Pioneer missionary in Japan dies at 98

MEDINA, Ohio—The younger of two sisters who helped pioneer the Mennonite church in northern Japan was noted for her wisdom and kindness.

Rhoda Ressler

Rhoda Magdalena Ressler, 98, of Medina, Ohio, died on Aug. 5 at The Inn at Medina. With her sister Ruth, Ressler spent 25 years in Japan—21 of those years with Mennonite Board of Missions, a predecessor agency of Mennonite Mission Network. The Resslers were instrumental in establishing a Mennonite church in the town of Kamishihoro in the country's northernmost region of Hokkaido, where they taught the Bible, made friends and offered themselves as a Christian presence.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Building communion focus of MWC meetings

MANILA, The Philippines—Building global communion, Paraguay 2009, strengthening relations with Asian and African continental church bodies, and hearing reports from the worldwide church were key themes at the July 31-Aug. 5 Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Executive Committee meetings.

This year's meeting immediately followed a two-day Mennonite Central Committee international summit, deliberately set in Manila to have MWC be a major participant. It was the first of a series of consultations MCC will conduct to discern its future vision, priorities and structure.

A significant action at this Executive Committee meeting was to move ahead on forming commissions to advise and serve the General Council and the member churches. Conversations over several years between the Global Mission Fellowship (GMF) and MWC aim to culminate in Paraguay in 2009 with GMF and the General Council Mission Commission joining to form one body.—*MWC*

Professors discuss creation, classroom

HARRISONBURG, Va.—At the fourth annual conference of Mennonite higher-education faculty held at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Aug. 8-9, two keynote speakers approached the theme "Creation, Christ and the Classroom" from opposite perspectives, theological and temporal.

"How the Logos creates the world is really unanswerable," said keynoter Willard Swartley, speaking on "The World Via the Word." Swartley, professor emeritus of New Testament at

frican journey brings Goshen student back to her roots

ydie Assefa, Goshen (Ind.) College senior, visits with her randmother in Ethiopia after living in Tanzania during oshen's Study Service Term. Assefa's father, Dagne Assefa, is n Ethiopian who moved to the United States in the 1970s to ttend Goshen. During her visit, she was able to visit with and eet about 100 relatives.—*Goshen College*

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., referenced John 1:1-18 and characterized the creation vs. evolution debate as irrelevant, declaring God "the enabler" who makes change possible.

Speaking in turn on "The Word Via the World," Doug Graber Neufeld promised, "My forays into theology will be brief and filled with trepidation." Yet Neufeld, who chairs EMU's biology and chemistry departments, sees spiritual challenges in "what we're doing to God's created world."—*EMU*

Grant to bolster women, minorities in science

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College, North Newton, received a grant from the National Science Foundation to help address the reality that ethnic/racial minorities and women make up only 6 percent and 25 percent, respectively, of the U.S. science and engineering workforce. With the grant, Bethel plans to offer 42 scholarships from $3,000 to $10,000, each renewable for up to four years. In addition, Bethel's program will place special emphasis on attracting Hispanic, African-American and female students.—*Bethel College*

Oldest Hesston College alumna dies at 102

HESSTON, Kan.—Bessie King Yoder, Kalona, Iowa, the oldest alumna of Hesston College, died Aug. 2 at the age of 102.

President Howard Keim gave a tribute at the memorial service for Yoder, held at Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church near Kalona, on Aug. 6.

"As president of her academy literary society, Bessie became a persuasive speaker and debater," said Hesston College historian John Sharp. "She would later prove that her skills of elocution had not diminished when at the age of 78 she spoke at the 75th anniversary alumni banquet, Nov. 24, 1984, and at age 98 she was the featured speaker at the Sept. 25, 2004, alumni banquet."—*Hesston College*

Former academic dean of Hesston College dies

HESSTON, Kan.—Paton Yoder, former academic dean at Hesston College who was instrumental in starting the nursing program in 1966, died Aug. 3 in Goshen, Ind., at the age of 96.

Yoder served as academic dean and professor of history and political science at Hesston from 1961 to 1970. (His son, Jim Yoder, now a chemistry professor at Hesston College, was a Hesston sophomore in 1961.)

A total of 1,224 nursing students have graduated from the program since it began in 1966 (the first class graduated in 1968).—*Hesston College*

Aibonito children raise funds for Argentina

AIBONITO, Puerto Rico—The children of Iglesia Menonita de Aibonito (Aibonito Mennonite Church) have raised more than $700 through Mennonite Mission Network's mission bank project to support Bible translation in Argentina.

The money will help mission workers in Argentina translate the Bible into the indigenous Toba language. In April, the church council handed out 25 mission banks, mostly to grandparents who passed them on to their grandchildren.

Because many of these children do not attend Iglesia Menonita de Aibonito regularly, Mim Godshall, council member, said she was doubtful many banks would return. However, something about the mission bank cause sparked the children's interest. Nine weeks later, Godshall was happy to report almost all came back full of money.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Church sponsors Ride-Your-Bike-to-Worship

GOSHEN, Ind.—More than 70 bikes lined the front sidewalk at Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen on Aug. 10. "We want to promote caring for God's creation," pastor Kevin Farmwald told the congregation. Fred Liechty, 80, was the oldest biker. Brian and Heather Reichenbach and their young children, Jonah and Claire, biked 24 miles from Warsaw, Ind., the day before to be part of the effort.—*Eighth Street Mennonite Church*

—compiled by Anna Groff

IN BRIEF

Mast Menno -Hof director

LeRoy Mast has been named the new executive director of Menno-Hof, the Amish and Mennonite information center in Shipshewana, Ind. He will succeed Joseph Yoder, who is retiring. Mast, who grew up in an Amish home in eastern Elkhart County, Ind., is currently conference minister for New York Mennonite Conference.—*Menno-Hof*

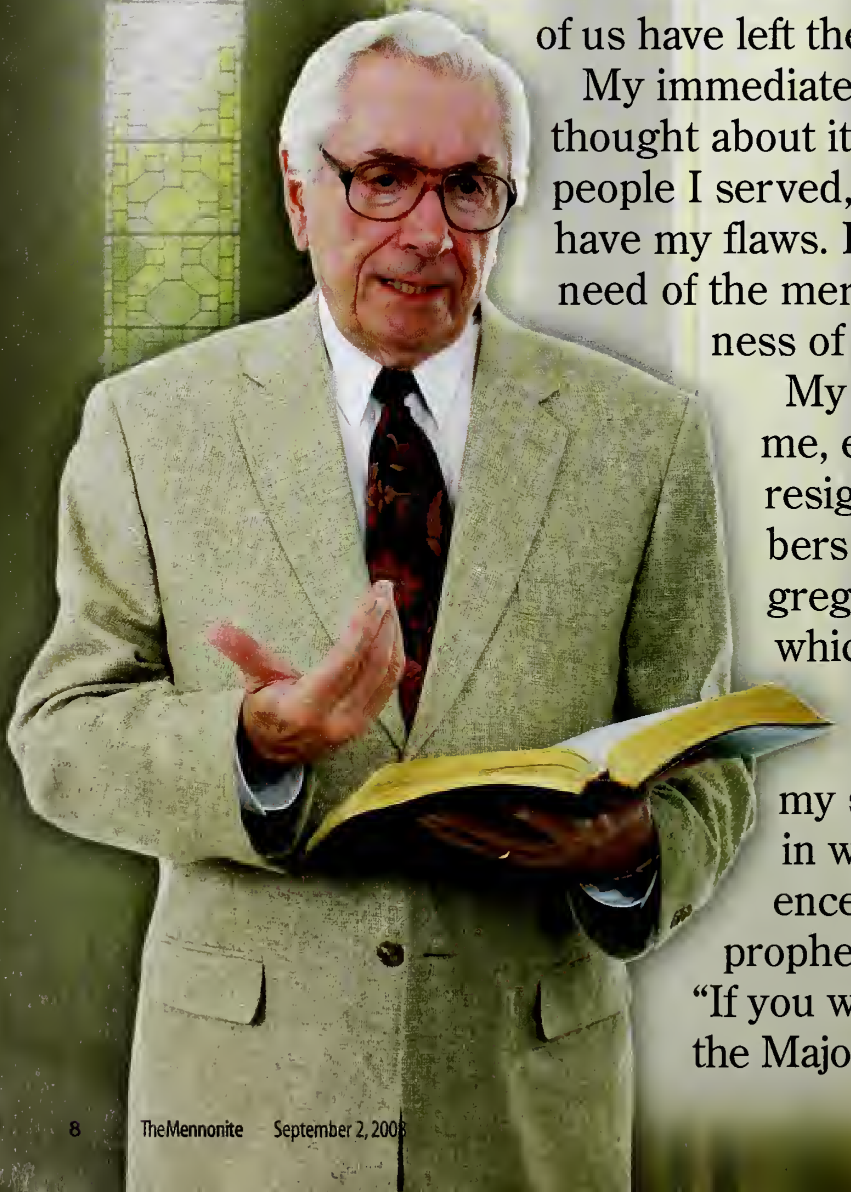
Familiar refrain

When Peter Hawkins, a professor at Boston University, asked the students in his entry-level course on the Bible if they had ever heard of the 23rd Psalm, about five hands went up. After he recited the text, almost everyone recognized parts of it, even if they didn't know the source. For one student it was a line in rock group Pink Floyd's "Sheep," for another a reference in rapper Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise." A third student claimed to recognize a refrain in the psalm from Pulp Fiction—but there the text is actually Ezekiel 25:17. "My students knew their movies and their lyrics but not the biblical source of 'the valley of the shadow of death,'" says Hawkins. "They were shocked when I revealed it."
—Reflections

Let the light of Christ Jesus shine through

The secret to longevity in pastoral ministry

By John F. Murray



Some time ago a friend asked me, "Why have you and your son had long tenures in pastoral ministry but some of us have moved every couple of years? Some of us have left the ministry. What's your secret?"

My immediate response was, "I've never thought about it and really don't know. I loved the people I served, but I'm sure you did the same. I have my flaws. I'm not eloquent. Daily I stand in need of the mercy and grace of God and the kindness of people."

My friend's question keeps haunting me, especially when I hear of pastors resigning under stress, unhappy members drifting from congregation to congregation, people leaving the faith in which they were active and many just dropping out.

I recall preaching the sermon at my son's ordination in October 1987 in which I emphasized some differences between the major and minor prophets in the Bible. I said to my son, "If you want to have a long ministry, be like the Major Prophets."

The Major Prophets were the God-centered preachers of their day. They focused on God while calling people to right living, faith, faithfulness, fellowship and hope. They had a long tenure in their ministry, as reflected in the length of their writings.

If you want to have a long ministry, be like the Major Prophets.

Isaiah was the prophet of God the Son. He prophesied the Messiah's birth (Isaiah 9) and his sacrificial death (Isaiah 53). He saw the Messiah as the one with power to transform our old leopard, bear, lion and cobra natures so that we all can live together in peace and harmony (Isaiah 11). This is a picture of our spiritual birth in our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus. Spiritual birth inspires new life, hope and harmony in a congregation.

Jeremiah was the prophet of God the Father. At the potter's house, Jeremiah saw God as the great potter who can take our broken, wounded and marred lives and remold them into something beautiful again for his use (Jeremiah 18). In chapters 31-32, God speaks, "I am Israel's father. ... This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel. ... I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ... For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." Forgiveness and restoration are unifying forces in a congregation.

Ezekiel is the prophet of God the Holy Spirit. In chapter 2 and the beginning of chapter 3, Ezekiel tells us how the Spirit of God came upon him and told him to digest the Word. He did, then he rushed off to preach, and God stopped him. God made Ezekiel sit down among his people until he could see life through their eyes and understand their needs. Then Ezekiel rushed off again to be the "watchman" for God. But God made Ezekiel's tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth and shut him up in a solitary place until he could understand God's heart longing to turn his wayward people to righteous living. Ezekiel's message inspires me to digest the Word, understand the people I serve and know the heart of God. I found blessings in heeding the Spirit's correction and receiving counsel from other leaders.

Many consider Daniel a major prophet. He was the prophet of God the Coming King. With Daniel I believe God can come even now and walk with us through today's fiery trials and lion dens. In the face of adversity, I remember Daniel and the faith of our Anabaptist forebears who endured great suffering because they believed that within the shadow of their crosses God stood keeping watch.

In contrast to the Major Prophets, the Minor Prophets had a short tenure to their ministry. They were the issue-centered preachers of their day. Their books are short because they focused on one or two issues. Today many preachers are issue-centered. They need new issues every so often to keep people following them. On the other hand, there are people who wander from church to church seeking a pastor to champion their issue and preach it their way. Congregations are splitting up over issues, and the resulting bitterness will take generations to heal.

When dealing with issues, I remember the Muckraker in *Pilgrim's Progress*. While he was intent on raking up the muck of earth, an angel of God hovered over him ready to bless him if he would only look up. But his eyes were fixed upon the muck he was raking and so he missed out on God's blessing.

God calls us pastors to be participants with him, which is neither slavery nor power wielding.

The Major Prophets also dealt with issues, but their vision of God and his redemptive provisions comes through again and again, giving hope, guidance and comfort. A vision of God inspired Moses at the burning bush, Saul on the Damascus Road, John on the Isle of Patmos and many others to become humble participants with God. As a pastor I often needed to renew my vision of God and his redemptive purposes. Too often in our emphasis on the love of God, we rob God of his majesty and holiness and make God out to be just our "chore-boy" who caters to our every whim.

Not only do we need a new vision of God, we need a new vision of our role as pastors and leaders. At times we have overemphasized the servant role. At other times we have overemphasized the power-authority role that for some goes with an office, a title and an ordination. God calls us to be participants with him, which is neither slavery nor power wielding.

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

Successful pastors and leaders have a broad view of how people can participate. As a pastor I like a missional emphasis that keeps together the three stories of Luke 10: the sending out of the 72 disciples to call people to repentance and faith, the Good Samaritan and ministering to the needs of people with our human resources and Mary worshiping and learning at the feet of Jesus. In every congregation, some will be better at helping with spiritual needs, some at ministering to physical needs and some at helping us worship and learn at the feet of Jesus. Congregations are greatly blessed when everyone participates and feels needed. We can let down our nets of faith, love and caring and become the fishers of men, women and children Jesus had in mind.

Also, successful pastors and leaders help members keep a missional vision beyond the congregation. As a pastor I felt fortunate to have Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Disaster Service, Mennonite schools, colleges, camping programs, publishers and other opportunities to help us reach beyond ourselves. Members of a congregation that have no vision beyond themselves become unhappy and contentious.

Let us use the Scriptures to help each other and our children find and worship Christ Jesus and participate with him in his kingdom.

Participating with God does not mean all will be peace and harmony. Satan will be active, and there is no resurrection life without the cross. Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me … and I'll be with you" (Matthew 16:24 and 28:20). When Jesus is with us, we have his authority. If we depart from Jesus, we lose authority.

A pastor of another denomination who heard I had a son in the ministry said, "I also have a son in the ministry. I preached his ordination sermon, and at the end of it I gave him a hammer and told him to hammer home the gospel."

I acknowledged that we do need to hear the gospel, for it is written, "Faith comes by hearing the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). And Jesus said, "You are clean through the words that I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). But I added that at the end of my sermon I gave my son a large white candle. I said to him, "John, may this candle remind you to let the light of Christ Jesus shine through every aspect of your ministry, be it preaching the Word, administering the ordinances of the church, ministering to the sick or bereaved, working with others in committees, counseling those seeking help or relating to the community or conference. John, may this candle ever remind you that the Holy Spirit uses the light of Christ Jesus as reflected in God's Word and in the holy lives of his followers to draw people toward true repentance, faith, faithfulness, fellowship, witness, service and hope. John, may the Lord bless your ministry to these ends."

We must remember four important things:

1. We don't have to be exactly the same. The prophets and apostles had their own unique style and message. My son's favorite prophet is Jeremiah, and mine is Ezekiel.

2. If we want a denomination and congregations that are strong and vibrant, we can learn much from the major and minor prophets. Let's major in the great themes of God's redemption and minor in the issues that disturb us. Too often we reverse these and consequently fall into the slough of despond.

3. We can also learn much from Matthew 2 about the use of God's Word. In that chapter, the Magi sought answers in the Scriptures so they could find and worship Christ Jesus. Herod sought the same information from Scripture so he might consolidate his power over people. Let us use the Scriptures to help each other and our children find and worship Christ Jesus and participate with him in his kingdom.

4. In all that we do, let the light of Christ Jesus shine through. Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). And we have this promise: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

I don't have all the answers to my friend's question, and I'm not one to judge the ministries of other pastors and congregations. I merely summarize what has blessed me in my pastoral experience. I lay down my active role in the assurance that my faith will live on in future generations.

John F. Murray is a member of Hopewell Mennonite Church, Kouts, Ind.

Faith

By Julie Cadwallader-Staub

Here is the humble caterpillar.
Look at him rippling toward that twig.
Watch how he attaches himself to it,
binding himself to what he knows he needs.

What is it about this attachment
that allows him to give over
his known and sturdy body,
his known and sturdy world?

See how he dissolves
from all he knows
into all he doesn't know;
from all that he now is
into all that he is becoming;
how his body accomplishes
what our minds can scarcely imagine.

Here is the humble caterpillar:

He has lived his whole life
on milkweed plants
one foot above the ground.

Now, he lives his whole life floating
from breeze to breeze
from flower to flower
from nectar to nectar

finally flying from Vermont
where I live
to Mexico
where I have never been.

Anything is possible in this world.

Julie Cadwallader-Staub lives in South Burlington, Vt.

Revelation is about Jesus, not vengeance.

How does Revelation

By Ted Grimsrud

Little round planet in a big universe; sometimes it looks blessed, sometimes it looks cursed; depends on what you look at, obviously; but even more it depends on the way that you see.—Bruce Cockburn, “Child of the Wind”

Revelation has the reputation of being about whistles and bells, great drama, visions of the violent shattering of the old and forceful entry of the new.

In a nutshell, this is what I think matters when we look at the book of Revelation. What are we looking for when we look at Revelation? And what does Revelation tell us about the way to see this “little round planet” and this “big universe”?

Revelation has the reputation of being about whistles and bells, great drama, visions of the violent shattering of the old and forceful entry of the new.

Many people welcome these visions, reading Revelation as predicting a bloody, future period of tribulation that could begin at any time—and that is to be welcomed as part of God’s work to bring ultimate salvation (and condemnation) to the human race. Wars and rumors of wars and the likelihood of a nuclear holocaust are all foretold in Revelation, say these people, and let’s praise God when they happen. This is the message of Hal Lindsey’s *The Late, Great Planet Earth* (the largest selling of all books published in the United States during the 1970s). This is the message of Tim LaHaye’s popular *Left Behind* books.

speak today?

Other people also read Revelation as being about violence, catastrophe and the shattering end of life as we know it, but they are appalled by these visions. Jonathan Kirsch, a writer for the *Los Angeles Times*, wrote a bestselling "exposé" of Revelation, *A History of the End of the World*. He characterizes the core message of Revelation like this: "The moral calculus of Revelation—the demonization of one's enemies, the sanctification of revenge taking and the notion that history must end in catastrophe—can be detected in some of the worst atrocities and excesses of every age, including our own."

Both Lindsey and Kirsch read Revelation looking for a message of violence, severe judgment and condemnation for God's human enemies. I suggest we read Revelation looking for something else.

Looking for guidance: We should read Revelation looking for guidance as we live amid wars and rumors of war. However, we need to take seriously Revelation's place in the Bible. The message of the Bible finds its sharpest and clearest expression in these brief words of Jesus: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself."

If we read Revelation for confirmation of Jesus' words, we will be able to make the best sense of the "words of this prophecy" (Revelation 1:3).

While we need to pay attention to the crazy and at times overwhelming visions in Revelation, we must not let them distract us from the core message of the book. We are given important clues to this message in the opening verse. This book is "the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:1). Whatever else we think we see here, it all needs to be oriented back to this original point. How do these visions help reveal Jesus Christ?

We could look for visions of an overwhelmingly violent Christ coming in the clouds to dominate his enemies and reward his friends—with the sense that the best motivation for becoming his friend is fear of eternal torture in the fires of hell. This is what fundamentalists like Hal Lindsey and skeptics like Jonathan Kirsch look for.

However, if we are looking for something else, something that helps us love our neighbor and have confidence that such love goes with the grain of the universe and is worth suffering for if need be, what will we find?

Revelation 1:5 is our first description of Jesus: "the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead and the ruler of the kings of the earth," who "freed us by" his self-sacrifice. The term "faithful witness" could also be translated "faithful martyr." The Greek word is "matrys" and has the clear sense of Jesus' faithful life embodying love of neighbor that led to his execution by the Romans. The image here is of the suffering servant, the faithful witness to God's love who came to care for others.

Jesus' willingness to remain faithful to the ways of love and compassion even to the point of execution enables his triumph.

Jesus won the victory that matters, the one affirmed right at the start and, as it turns out throughout the book, by his "blood." Jesus' willingness to remain faithful to the ways of love and compassion even to the point of execution enables his triumph.

Self-sacrificial love: Revelation portrays two distinct kinds of victory or conquering. Jesus conquers through self-sacrificial love. The Roman Empire conquers through domination. Writers such as Hal Lindsey and Jonathan Kirsch, opposed as they may be in their own politics and religion, stand together in misinterpreting the meaning of

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13

the visions of catastrophe in Revelation. Ultimately, these visions expose the evil of the Beast, the Roman Empire, all empires (including the American Empire). The wars and rumors of war reflect the opposite of God's will.

Two later visions of Jesus confirm that Revelation reveals him as the suffering servant, not the conquering avenger.

In chapter five, John weeps because he does not believe that anyone will be found who can open the scroll that contains the message of the consummation of history. An angel tells him not to weep, someone has been found. This is the key moment of the entire book. Who is worthy to open the scroll? John hears, mighty, conquering king. But what does he see (again, the key element of sight, of revelation)? He sees a Lamb, standing (resurrected) as if slaughtered (executed by crucifixion). This Lamb, who conquered through persevering love, can open the scroll and therefore is worthy to be praised by all creation.

Jesus' victory—won by his love—leads not to punishment of human enemies but their healing.

A second climactic moment comes in chapter 18. For some time the book anticipates a great final battle, the "battle of Armageddon." All the world's armies gather for this battle. In the book-of-Revelation-as-violent reading, this is the key moment in the entire book. However, in the Revelation-as-revelation-of-Jesus reading, we see something different when we get to the "battle scene." The savior rides forth on a white horse, as if to battle. But he is armed only with a sword coming out of his mouth—that is, the word proclaiming the good news of God's love. Before he gets to the battle, he is clothed in "a robe dipped in blood" (19:13)—that is, his blood has already been shed.

The act that frees us and wins the battle is Jesus' faithfulness to the point of execution, vindicated by God's raising him from the dead. This has already happened. The battle of Armageddon is simply a matter of the powers of evil being gathered up and thrown into the lake of fire. And—a reference always missed by the Revelation-as-violent interpreters—the kings of the earth (the human enemies of God throughout the book) do not end up in the lake of fire but in the New Jerusalem (21:24). Jesus' victory—won by his love—leads not to punishment of human enemies but their healing.

The book of Revelation has big hopes. It portrays the fall of Babylon—a dream of the end of systems of domination, of nations pouring their wealth (and their children) down the rat hole of militarism, of economics that impoverish the billions and destroy the earth for the sake of further enriching the already rich. In hoping for the fall of Babylon, Revelation also hopes for the healing of Babylon's human apologists. The generals and capitalists and presidents who do the Beast's bidding are themselves in bondage to evil powers. When those powers are destroyed, their human servants are freed. The kings of the earth find healing.

This message of hope is crucial in understanding the revelation of Jesus Christ that John reports in this book. But what truly matters for us is to recognize the means to these goals—the goals are achieved through the self-sacrificial love of the Lamb. The conquering that achieves authentic victory throughout Revelation happens through the power of consistent love.

Throughout the book, John's readers are exhorted in only one direction. They are not to fight the Beast's violence with violence of their own. They are not to seek to conquer the Beast using his methods. They have a simple but extraordinarily challenging calling: Follow the Lamb wherever he goes. As he conquers with self-sacrificial love, so too do his followers.

Ted Grimsrud is associate professor of theology and peace studies at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Car story

A business transaction in the Third Way

By Marilyn Miller

100
120
km/h
14
52894

Stockxpert.com

For years, Adrienne De Forrest, a member of Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church, had driven a 1991 Subaru station wagon that now had over 250,000 miles on the odometer. The car had been reliable and the engine was strong, but some peripherals were starting to go bad due to age and weathering. Aware that she might have to replace the car sometime, she researched dealers' prices for used cars and put away enough money to cover the cost if it came to that.

It came to that but not in the expected way of paying money to a used-car dealer.

Last Jan. 24, Adrienne's old Subaru's catalytic converter and half the exhaust system broke away from the bottom of the car to drag on the pavement. Since she was near her Subaru shop, she was able to coast over to the garage for an estimate on repairs.

The bad news was that the repairs would be costly.

Not wanting to make a snap decision on whether to repair or sell her car, she went out to the shop's waiting area to pray for guidance. While she prayed, a woman came in and sat down next to her. The woman told Adrienne that she was there to sell her deceased mother's Subaru but that she was at the mercy of the shop because of a sight disability that caused her to be unable to drive elsewhere. They wouldn't agree to her asking price, but she needed that amount desperately. She jokingly asked her listener if by any chance she wanted to buy a newer model Subaru in perfect condition with only 56,000 miles on it, all for a good price.

Adrienne's dilemma was solved right then and there. The price was so good, in fact, that she paid the woman more than her asking price, and they parted as good friends.

Adrienne wanted to make peace with her Subaru repair shop, since their sale had been lost right under the wide-eyed gazes of the shop owner, the kindly salesman and all the shop workers. She agreed to pay what the sales commission would have been, with half going to the salesman and the other half going to take all the shop workers out to lunch.

Her final task was to take care of her old Subaru wagon with the broken exhaust still sitting on the lot. While she and the salesman talked, a young man who had been hovering nearby approached them, saying he was there to find a car for his girlfriend. She desperately needed an inexpensive car, she preferred a Subaru wagon, and he was a welder by trade, so he could fix the exhaust system himself.

When the young man's girlfriend arrived with two babies in her arms, Adrienne knew to simply give her the old station wagon. The full amount she had paid so far was still slightly under the amount she had originally put away, and the synchronicity that had allowed for several people's needs to be met so easily was just too directed to ignore.

> **The radical, Third Way teachings of Jesus Christ had proved not only inspiring in theory but workable in the world.**

Adrienne went home that evening delighted, for on this day a small amount of wealth had been fairly distributed, and those in need had all been satisfied. The radical, Third Way teachings of Jesus Christ had proved not only inspiring in theory but workable in the world. Maybe this was just a small business transaction, but couldn't the principles work on any scale?

Adrienne's new car is a 1999 AWD Subaru Legacy, 30-Year Anniversary Model metallic sandstone paint with black leather interior, a sun roof, a CD player, new tires and a shiny 56,000-mile engine.

Marilyn Miller is a member of Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

A house added to others

by Stanley W. Green

The essence of a missional vision is to align with the purposes of God. But what does that mean? Working toward such an alignment forces a congregation to answer two questions: Where does the congregation locate itself? What is the congregation's self-identity?

Location is about more than a street address. It is about investigating how the church locates itself between the culture it's in and the reign of God that forms it.

All our congregations and all parts of the church need to ask about our relationship to the culture. Is our church accommodated by the culture? Does it uncritically embrace the values and obsessions of the culture? Is it "at home" with the myths and ideologies of the culture? Is it captive to the aspirations and interests in the culture?

The Anabaptists were one of the first groups since the early church to recover a missional consciousness that gave energy to fresh mission initiatives.

Or do we see our congregation as a pilgrim community, a community of exiles whose allegiance is to another sovereign, one whose citizenship is in another kingdom? Are we a people whose membership is defined not by race or ethnicity or ties of blood and nationality but by our common submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male and female?

Separation of church and state: Since the midpoint of the third century of the Christian movement, the alliance between the church and the power of the state gave birth to what we now call Christendom. The state became increasingly identified as Christian. The church increasingly became a chaplain to the state's interest, providing ritual blessing to the emperor and offering prayers for the state's interests.

This relationship between church and state led to the church's inability to function in a missional capacity in the culture. Progressively the church lost its critical distance from its culture and its ability to do other than champion the interests of the state. This unholy alliance between the church and the culture lasted for almost 1,000 years.

The advent of the Reformation at the midpoint of the second millennium seemed to hold a promise that the church would recover its pilgrim identity and sever its compromised relationship with the state. Unfortunately, despite the reasons and energy with which they severed their relationships with Rome, Martin Luther, John Calvin and, tragically, Ulrich Zwingli could not disengage from their identification and alliance with the state.

The church, even for these ardent Reformers, was identified with geographic location and physical space. The phrase "Eius regio, cuius religio" (to each region its own religion) became the norm. The church's identity and membership was defined by the bounds of the emperor's rule or by national political boundaries.

This preoccupation with geography led to the elevation of sacred space: The church became the building. Church buildings became the visible expressions of faith, the defining symbols of the society's religious affiliation. Church no longer represented the community of those gathered around Jesus, who pledged allegiance not to temporal rulers and their earthly kingdoms but to God and the purposes of God's kingdom in the world.

Moving again toward missional: In the Radical Reformation Anabaptists seemed ready to follow its logical and faithful conclusion what it meant to pledge allegiance to God's kingdom and to follow Jesus in life. These radical reformers were determined, despite enormous cost, to disengage from the unholy alliance with the state. Their thoroughgoing biblical commitment led our forebears to a serious exploration of Jesus' definition of the identity of Christian communities as those who are "in the world but not of the world" (John 17:16-19).

One consequence of the commitment to live out the implications of this confession is that the Anabaptists were one of the first groups since the early church to recover a missional consciousness that gave energy to fresh mission initiatives.

Missional people understand that the church happens where the Messianic ministry of Jesus is exercised, where the people of God understand their call in light of God's purpose, where witness is made to Jesus Christ and where service shaped by God's intent for healing and hope in the world is offered and the consequences joyfully accepted.

This means the church is a footnote to following Jesus. Jesus did not establish the church or a specific church. He did not organize local congregations. He did not appoint disciples to different ministries within elaborate structures. He did not convene a synod. He did not set a budget. He did not indicate what kind of sanctuary people should use to worship. Jesus didn't even take offerings.

This is not to suggest that Jesus was an accidental figure who was so movement-oriented that he

The church is a footnote to following Jesus

despised organizations or institutions. Jesus saw himself as the fulfillment of the Messianic expectations of the Jewish people. He understood that in his incarnation God was inaugurating a new dispensation called the kingdom of God. In him the hopes of Israel were being realized.

When his ministry began, Jesus called together a following community of 12 disciples. Jesus provided the activity around which this community's life was organized. He announced the kingdom, fed the hungry, engaged sinners and the marginalized and healed those who were diseased. When he called the disciples to announce the gospel, they proclaimed Jesus as the good news of God's making in a broken and hurting world.

The community, then, is Christ-centered. It is not the emperor or a building that shapes the identity of the Christian community but Jesus.

The way the Messianic community is constituted makes it impossible just to enjoy its existence without active participation in its ministry. The fruits of the Messiah's own ministry are not gifts intended to be cherished as personal possessions but are intended as power for a cause.

Some perceptive scholars have said the book of Acts could be read as the Acts of the Spirit.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." The Spirit is the power at work through the disciples.

From its beginnings, the church appointed fallible men and recognized the ministries of frail women. Under the power and the leadership of the Spirit, the witness of generations of fallible women and men was made effective; soon all of Asia Minor and many regions in Europe had heard of the Messiah and accepted his lordship.

The missional character of the church is found here: We are born into the church by the Spirit of God, who empowers every believer to be a "sent one" who gives witness to Jesus, the Messiah.

The New Testament uses two words to describe the church. We are most familiar with "ekklesia," a dynamic, organic concept that means the "assembly of the chosen or called-out ones," referring to the gathering of ones chosen to vote or determine the future of the "polis." When used of the church, it refers to the assembly of those chosen for a specific purpose—to witness to God's kingdom.

The other word used in the New Testament to refer to the church is "paroikia" ("the house added to the others"). That means the church exists for the sake of the others. The real object for the church is the nations, the whole of humanity. All God's plans and all God's initiatives are directed toward announcing, demonstrating and working out his purposes as well as symbolizing it with a fitting celebration that anticipates and invites all humanity (Revelation 7:9).

Viewing the church as "paroikia" means the church is not the center and not an end in itself. It is temporary. Praise and worship of God is what is permanent.

It also means we take the society to which the house is added as seriously as we can. It is a call to intentional, imaginative engagement. The missional church vision is the vision for a community that is attentive to what God is doing in the world.

The fruits of the Messiah's own ministry are not gifts intended to be cherished as personal possessions but are intended as power for a cause.

The church of Christendom allowed itself to become a servant of the status quo. The missional church we envision and seek to embrace is, by God's Spirit, an agent of transformation—an instrument of healing and hope—overcoming racism and xenophobia, caring about the hungry and the oppressed, ministering to the unloved and the lost.

We must live by the new kingdom values reflected in the life of the Messiah, who announced that the Spirit called him to announce good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to set at liberty the oppressed, to give recovery of sight to the blind and to announce the year of God's forgiveness, welcome, love and grace to all people (Luke 4:18-19).

That same Spirit waits to empower us for our witness in the world.

Stanley Green is executive director/CEO of Mennonite Mission Network.

A poisonous brew

Berry Friesen is a member of East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

As N.T. Wright sees it, something is awry in western Christianity. Wright, the Bishop of Durham for the Church of England and a prominent evangelical scholar, doesn't flat-out say we've become heretics, but he comes close. The problem, in brief, is that we no longer believe in the resurrection.

In its place, we've adopted Gnostic notions about life after death, says Wright in his latest book, *Surprised by Hope*. This has neutered our faith and made it the opiate Karl Marx said it was. "A piety that sees death as the moment of 'going home at last,' the time when we are 'called to God's eternal peace,' has no quarrel with power-mongers who want to carve up the world to suit their own ends."

I read Wright's book over Memorial Day weekend, a time when we are encouraged to remember the departed and especially the sacrifices of those who died in military uniform. As I read, I also tried to come to terms with the realization that I live in a nation that invades and occupies other countries without provocation, then tortures prisoners in its custody.

Our leaders intend to dominate the world for the sake of our comfort and will wrap themselves in the banner of our Lord as they do it.

Wright's point is that our hopes for life after death, and our hopes for justice and peace in this world, are brought together in the kingdom of God and sealed by the physical resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Those who understand this unity also see continuity between the present world and the future one. This gives them the robust determination to "build for the kingdom" and oppose injustice in this life.

Which brings me to George W. Bush. During the violence and dishonor of these nearly eight years we have been led by a man who identified himself as a committed believer in Jesus Christ. Whether we claim him or not, he is one of us—at least so far as the world perceives it.

We may prefer to minimize the significance of this and pass it off as another instance in which an apparently devout Christian is found to have engaged in wrongdoing.

But what has emerged in recent years is much more far-reaching: a synthesis between Christian triumphalism (we deserve the best) and U.S. imperialism (we are the strongest). This is supported theologically by the view that what we do in this physical world isn't important when compared to the spiritual reality just ahead. Mixed together, this is a poisonous brew that produces leaders who are devout, belligerent, and utterly without shame.

Those who have long been critics of our nation and its international actions may wave this off as old news. That would be a mistake, in my opinion. We Christ followers in the United States are at a turning point because an ugly truth is no longer in dispute: Our leaders intend to dominate the world for the sake of our comfort and will wrap themselves in the banner of our Lord as they do it. If we do not agree, we had better find a way to make this clear to our neighbors.

Wright says we will find the courage to take such a stand if our hope is in the resurrection. "It was people who believed robustly in the resurrection, not people who compromised and went in for a mere spiritualized survival, who stood up against Caesar in the first centuries of the Christian era." And, he writes: "[Jesus'] resurrection, and the promise of God's new world that comes with it, creates a program for change and offers to empower it. Those who believe the gospel have no choice but to follow."

As wrenching as it has been to see our beloved country pursue an imperial agenda, it is far worse to see the gospel of Jesus Christ adulterated by that same spirit. Tempted as we are by thoughts of earthly privilege followed by disembodied bliss, we need to remember that God's Son came to live on this earth and redeem it as his own. Can we aspire to be part of anything less?

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Remembering our baptism**—John D. Roth
- **Welcoming the strangers in your life**—Jan Johnson

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

Focus groups want health-care access

Proposed plan for health-care access for all pastors goes to Executive Board.

Delegates at San José 2007 gave the go-ahead for Mennonite Church USA to develop a plan that could provide health insurance for all pastors and church workers in the denomination's congregations. Now that plan has been tested with focus groups and will be presented to the Executive Board later this month for approval to proceed.

Following that delegate action, Keith Harder, director of the Health Care Access Project, and a project team formulated a vision (www.mennoniteusa.org/Default.aspx?tabid=382) and some details for how it could work. From March to August, the project team met with 27 focus groups. These consisted of 250 people from 147 congregations and represented all but four of the 21 area conferences. The team also made presentations at the African-American Mennonite Association in Elkhart, Ind., a Hispanic council in Lancaster, Pa., and Hispanic pastors in Dallas, Texas, and Oregon.

Harder says there are 80-100 Mennonite Church USA pastors (out of 1,200 who are 64 or younger) with no health insurance. Others are underinsured. Others are insured but have preexisting conditions and may not be able to get health insurance if they change insurers.

"Portability is a big issue," Harder says. The project team knows of congregations that wanted to call a pastor, but that pastor had preexisting conditions and would not be covered under a health plan available to that congregation.

In the proposed plan, such preexisting conditions are not a factor; everyone is accepted in the plan who is credentialed and works (not necessarily is paid) 20 hours a week for the church.

Harder says he was pleased by the strong desire in these focus groups to respond to those who are uninsured. He was also surprised that cost was not as big an issue as he had expected. To aid in this, the team asked congregations participating in a focus group to submit information about the congregation and what they were paying for health insurance. Some said it was no more than what they were already paying. For others the cost would be greater.

The costs for the plan have three components: (1) the insurance itself; (2) mutual aid (guaranteed insurability) and (3) access (the mission or justice component).

The mutual aid component helps those congregations with pastors who have preexisting conditions. The third component helps provide health insurance for those who now do not have it. This can be seen as a matter of justice and as strengthening the witness of Mennonite Church USA and lends greater integrity to efforts to influence the U.S. government in making health care more accessible to everyone.

What might this look like practically? Take, for example, a congregation of 100 regular attenders with one full-time pastor who has health insurance through her spouse. In this plan, that congregation would pay into the plan a fee of $2,300 (for the one pastor; double that for two pastors) plus $1,000 ($10 per regular attender). This money would help provide for those who have preexisting conditions and subsidize congregations that cannot afford health insurance for their pastors.

The congregation would receive benefits as well, including long-term disability coverage. It also protects the congregation if it should want to hire a pastor later who has preexisting conditions.

One of the responses to this idea of helping other congregations in this way is that it may detract from other mission giving.

Harder acknowledges this may happen, but this plan also helps tie churches together. It also increases our integrity and strengthens our witness to the larger society. It has more integrity to call on the government to make health care accessible to all if the church is doing that with its workers.

As a result of responses from the focus groups, the project team has made some adjustments to their plan. They've incorporated an emphasis on wellness and will provide financial incentives, such as knowing one's body mass index and blood pressure and improving those. They've also raised the lifetime maximum.

"In the big picture," says Harder, "we concluded that it would be better to develop a new, churchwide health plan rather than just raise money for those without insurance." This plan has the potential to create a greater sense of interdependence, he says. "Such a plan, where we work together to care for one another … will be much more sustainable over time."—*Gordon Houser*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

Rate your readiness to advocate for your congregation's participation in this plan (from 1=would not advocate to 6=would advocate).

Percentage ranked 4, 5 or 6: 84.1

Percentage ranked 5 or 6: 55.1

Rate your congregation's likelihood of participation in this plan (from 1=would not participate to 6=would participate).

Percentage ranked 4, 5 or 6: 84.1

Percentage ranked 5 or 6: 55.1

Iraqis recall war horrors in Baghdad

Mennonite Central Committee helps Chaldean Catholic refugees in Jordan.

Melissa Engle

Meeron Chamoun tells of children being kidnapped in Baghdad. His father, Majid Chamoun, and twin siblings Karol and Karaam are at right.

Meeron Chamoun is only 8 years old, but he courageously shares vivid memories of children being kidnapped from his school in Baghdad and school closures resulting from bombings and threats of bomb attacks.

"They kidnapped 16 kids from my school," he says. Chamoun also remembers the explosions and threats of explosions in his school.

Chamoun and his parents, Majid Chamoun and Missa Hanni, and his siblings now live in Amman, Jordan, waiting for resettlement in another country.

"We don't have a future in Amman," says Hanni. "There is pain in this waiting, but we know that someday things will change."

The lack of peaceful options to deal with conflicts in Iraq has resulted in a cycle of violence that has uprooted and displaced about 4.8 million people—about 2.8 million have found refuge in safer regions in Iraq, and about 2 million have found safety in other countries, mainly Syria and Jordan.

This family is among 25,000 Iraqi Christians who have fled to Jordan, says Father Raymond Moussalli, who was sent in 2002 by the Chaldean Catholic Church in Baghdad to start a church in Amman for Chaldean Catholic refugees from Iraq.

Through financial donations and grants from Mennonite Central Committee and other partner organizations, Father Moussalli's church provides services and programs to support Iraqi families.

Father Moussalli says when he visits Iraqi refugees living in Jordan he senses their desire to return to their homes and families in Iraq but many cannot return until peace is restored.

Majid Chamoun and Hanni were born in Baghdad. Chamoun, an engineer, owned an electrical appliance shop. Chamoun says he became a target for militant groups in 2004 because he had sold televisions and air conditioning units to the international military forces. So he and the children fled to Amman for three months. His wife stayed in Baghdad, as she had no passport.

He tried to re-establish his business when he returned, but 10 men stole everything. This time the whole family fled to Amman but returned because they wanted to give Meeron the opportunity to go to school. Only in 2007 was new legislation passed in Jordan that gives all Iraqi children there access to Jordanian schools.

Chamoun once again tried to open his shop, but militants bombed and burned it—and sent threatening letters to his house. The family went into hiding, but in March 2006 men from this militant group found Chamoun and offered him a job to make explosives. He rejected it, knowing that saying no was a risk. The family tried to hide again, but within a few months they were found.

"In June 2006, we left Baghdad for the last time," says Chamoun, adding he does not expect it will ever be safe enough for him to return.
—Gladys Terichow of Mennonite Central Committee

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2008 TOURS

CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)
TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)
FOLLOWING the STEPS of MOSES (November 2-14)

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (January 3-13)
CHURCHES AND SAFARIS in KENYA and TANZANIA (February 9-20)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 4-17)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (June 5-19)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-19)
MWC #1 / #3 / #4 / #6 - SOLD OUT
MWC #2 - CHILE, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY (July 5-20) A Few Seats
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and BOLIVIA (July 12-25)
MWC #7 - PARAGUAY and IGUAZU FALLS (July 8-20)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (July 31-August 13)
MENNONITE STORY in POLAND (September 15-23)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (October 24-November 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2010 TOURS

AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 5-25)
WITH OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY:
SPRINGTIME in HOLLAND, BELGIUM & GERMANY (May 6-17)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 1-14)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA & ITS FJORDS (June 13-28)
PENNSYLVANIA to EUROPE (June 19-July 2)
ISRAEL/PALESTINE (June 24-July 5)
SEE WEB SITE FOR MORE TOURS TO OBERAMMERGAU

TOURMAGINATION
DISCOVERY & FELLOWSHIP
"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

Colombians ask MWC to support efforts

Government says it will consider anyone contacting FARC a military target.

The Mennonite Church of Colombia is prepared to take risks to work for peace in the conflicted country. Peter Stucky, Mennonite World Conference Executive Committee member for Latin America from Colombia, reported at meetings in Manila, The Philippines, Aug. 19 that MWC member churches in Colombia have taken up initiatives to build bridges between warring factions there. They also hope to draw in other people who believe that the conflict needs to be solved through dialogue.

"The [church] has been very clear that it is the church's vocation and mandate to dialogue with any armed group that is willing to do so in the search for peace for Colombia," said Stucky. Because contacts with militants implies risks, the church seeks support from international church bodies "to give moral support, to offer solidarity and, most important, to give spiritual cover."

Stucky brought a proposal from the Mennonite Church of Colombia asking MWC to express its support for the church's peace initiatives, including contact with the armed parties, urging humanitarian action and constructive conversations to seek peace and justice.

"The initiatives reflect these churches' desire to remain true to their calling of being salt and light in a country whose soul cries and pleads for peace in the ongoing conflict," said Danisa Ndlovu, MWC president-elect. "The Executive Committee has no choice but to support [the proposal] even though to some it might appear risky and uncomfortable."

Conflict has devastated Colombia for 60 years, resulting in thousands of violent deaths, disappearances and kidnappings each year.

The Mennonite Church of Colombia has worked closely with other churches on peace education and with organizations and coalitions in human rights efforts. It has contacted guerrilla groups—the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the National Liberation Army and the United Self-defense of Colombia, a paramilitary group now demobilizing—as well as the Colombian military. The intent was to build bridges of communication among the armed parties as well as between them, the church and civilians.

Stucky said the church has discussed its initiatives with Colombia's First Lady, who listened sympathetically. It has begun contact with a guerrilla leader made possible by a church member who lives near that leader.

The government has made it clear, however, that anyone contacting the FARC will be considered a military target. Stucky said that having the support of international church bodies would reduce the risk to church members.

"MWC support is a way of actively praying for these peace efforts and being prepared to speak on behalf of the churches when others criticize the risks they take," said Nancy Heisey, MWC president.

The Executive Committee affirmed support for the peace efforts of its member churches in Colombia, as well as other churches, and spent time in prayer for Colombia.—*Ferne Burkhardt of Mennonite World Conference*

We came for the Values, and the Value.

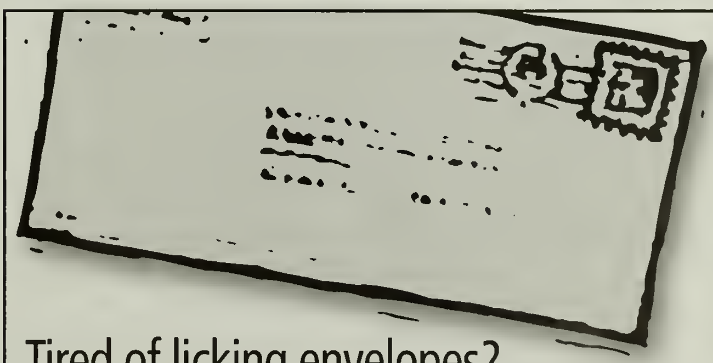
MENNO HAVEN

Relationships. Values. Options.

MENNO VILLAGE • NORTHFIELD • PENN HALL

800.222.6695 www.mennohaven.org

Menno Haven is committed to providing equal housing for all.



Tired of licking envelopes?

Take your giving online to **giving.MennoniteUSA.org**

Mennonite Church USA

Seeds planted in Senegalese hearts, fields

Friends of the Wolof group wants the gospel to be 'incarnated in Wolof flesh.'

Margaret De Jong

Ibu (left), a regional "talibé Insa" (followers of Jesus) leader, consults with a Saag, a local chief.

Mustard seeds of faith sown over the past decade have multiplied into more than five tons of seed peanuts in northern Senegal, where a drought has provoked food shortages.

In July, seven villages that had poor harvests last year were able to plant community fields with peanuts distributed by local followers of Jesus and mission workers.

Ibu*, the regional leader of the "talibé Insa" (followers of Jesus), says a village chief fought back tears when he witnessed the seed peanuts delivery and expressed his desire for involvement with "the group who is following Christ."

After planting the fields, Ibu and mission workers shared with the villagers about how God had provided the seed peanuts through the love of Christians in North America. Ibu also requested that the villagers not use occult methods to insure a plentiful harvest but instead ask God for rain. Some of the chiefs are planning to travel with Ibu to each other's villages to pray for prosperous growth in the fields of their neighbors.

Friends of the Wolof—a group of congregations, businesses and individuals established by LifeSpring Community Church in Goshen, Ind.—has engaged in ministry in Senegal since 1999 through a partnership with Mennonite Mission Network. During the first years, small business ventures and experimental agriculture helped build friendships and trust among the Wolof people, 99.9 percent of whom are Muslim.

The seven villages were selected to receive seed peanuts on the basis of relationships that had been cultivated with FOW personnel over the years. There are new followers of Jesus in most of the villages, though many of them still keep this identity secret for fear of persecution.

In two of the villages, Carol and Irene Bornman have been sharing about Jesus for the past four years through chronological Bible storying. This method of telling about God's love breaking into human history begins with portions of the Scriptures shared by Islam and the Christian faith. In the third village, Jim and Paula Hanes, with their two children, experimented with innovative agriculture and telling biblical stories. The four remaining locations welcomed a village-to-village team of North American supporters in 2006. This team, led by Charles Buller, a leader at LifeSpring Community Church, formed friendships that have been nourished by Senegalese followers and subsequent FOW visits. Buller will lead a second village-to-village team to Senegal in November to further support the ministry of local believers.

Ibu, who had been a clandestine follower of Jesus before the arrival of FOW workers, has assumed leadership of the growing group of believers, working through Mission Inter Senegal, a partner with Mennonite Mission Network.

"We wanted the gospel for the Wolof people to be incarnated into Wolof flesh," says Jonathan Bornman, FOW team member.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of Mennonite Mission Network*

***Wolof names have been changed to protect identity.**

help me **change** my world
teach English
transform lives
influence society

Feeling adventurous? Looking for a new challenge? Take your teaching to Lithuania. We are looking for instructors to teach English. But teaching English is only the beginning. Join us as we engage students in an educational experience that allows them to explore faith and develop caring relationships. Be a part of equipping our students to lead in the transformation of Eastern Europe. Unleash the power of a Christian education on a society in transition.

Current Openings:
University professors in English, Business, Psychology and Theology; PhD recommended.
EFL Instructors for Intensive English Program.

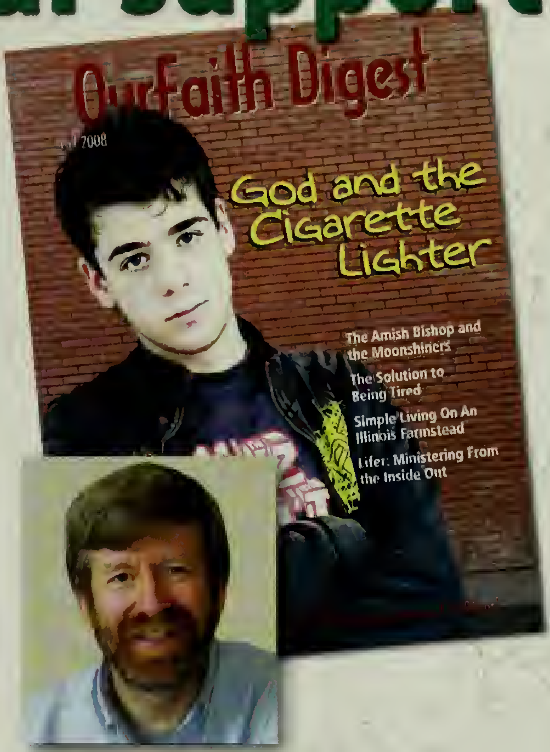
For more information:
www.lcc.lt
opportunities@lcc.lt
1 888 4 ELI LCC

LCC INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Two very different magazines
Two different purposes
Both need your support!

TheMennonite
August 19, 2008
www.TheMennonite.org
more than Sunday school Page 6
12 The treasure of adult Sunday school
16 No more church as usual
18 Sent for the sake of the world
32 It starts with Sunday school

Everett J.Thomas, editor


OurFaith Digest
2008
God and the Cigarette Lighter
The Amish Bishop and the Moonshiners
The Solution to Being Tired
Simple Living On An Illinois Farmstead
Lifer: Ministering From the Inside Out

Joe Miller, editor

As the official periodical for Mennonite Church USA, ***The Mennonite***:

- provides a forum for the voices in the church,
- promotes denominational ministries,
- offers an editorial voice distinct from these ministries,
- is published twice each month.

The Mennonite is a self-supporting entity made viable by subscription and advertising sales.

To subscribe:
1-800-790-2498

TheMennonite
www.themennonite.org

As a free, independent, grassroots publication for the Mennonite/Anabaptist church, ***OurFaith Digest***:

- seeks to reinforce the work of your church,
- tells stories that nourish faith, family and missions,
- informs and inspires everyday life in Christ.

Published three times/year, ***OurFaith Digest*** is a self-supporting entity made viable though your donations.

To donate:
1-800-790-2498

OurFaith Digest
www.ourfaithdigest.org

1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

Wedding plans with the earth in mind

Three couples use alternative gift registries, favors and make donations.

Weddings are big business; when they follow social trends in the United States, they can also require big budgets. But some couples challenge the assumptions promulgated by the U.S. wedding industry. Assistant editor Anna Groff's assignment was to interview three couples whose recent weddings challenged current social trends: Kristen (Hoober) and Mark Leichty, who have settled in Ames, Iowa; Sarah (Kraybill)and Andrew Burkhalter, both environmentalists living in Seattle; Stephanie Hirschler and Michael Honderich, members of Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind.—*Editor*

For full-length Q&A interviews with the couples, see www.themennonite.org.

Kristen and Mark Leichty

What about your wedding did you decide to do differently than the average mainstream?

We decided we wanted our wedding to benefit others. A Scripture text for our wedding was Romans 12:1-2: "Don't be like the people of this world, but let God change the way you think. Then you will know how to do everything that is good and pleasing to him."

After hearing a presentation at church about the Church World Service "Giving Hope" program in East Africa, we were given a note card made by HIV/AIDS Rwandan orphans. We adapted these for our wedding invitations.

Where did you register and why?

We are both in our late 30s and had already established households, so we gave people an opportunity to make donations to one of these organizations: Emerge Ministries, a local nonprofit organization that provides training and assistance to low-income families; Mennonite Mission Network's motorbikes project for Congolese pastors and Church World Service's "Giving Hope" program in Eastern Africa.

We were overwhelmed by people's generosity. We were able to contribute more than $5,500, divided among the three organizations. We discovered that some people still wanted to get us a personal gift, and we didn't want to take that joy away from them.

Would you recommend these choices?

Yes, it had some complications, but we kept telling ourselves that living a Christian life isn't promised to be easy and trying to do things differently than our culture dictates might take extra effort.

Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Hybrid auto discount

Because we believe in stewardship and care of the environment, we will give a 1% discount on the interest rate for a loan used to purchase a vehicle equipped with a combined electric-gasoline engine.

Hybrid auto discount: *Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business.

Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

timely tip:
Check your smoke alarms!

Sarah K. and Andrew Burkhalter

Why did you choose findgift.com over other wedding registries? What other options did you offer? Findgift.com is a Web site that allows you to register for any product offered online by any store. We were able to be deliberate about finding gift options that both aligned with our values and were reasonably priced. We were able to choose many products from places as varied as Ten Thousand Villages, Bed Bath and Beyond, Greenhome.com and REI. Since we both work at environmental nonprofits we also encouraged people to purchase carbon offsets in lieu of a gift. We also invited people to donate to Mennonite Central Committee and the capital campaign that was being held by First Mennonite Church of San Francisco to purchase the building that houses its Mennonite Voluntary Service unit.

Stephanie and Michael Honderich

What did you do instead of traditional favors? The decision to offer these options for giving was really a by-product of how we decided to handle our wedding favors. Many couples give a $1 to $2 gift to each guest that attends the wedding. However, these tokens are rarely significant and often end up in the trash. So we each chose an organization to donate $1 per guest to: New World Arts, a community theater in Goshen, and Tanzania Education Aid, founded by Stephanie's sister and brother-in-law. This option not only offers a gift of significance that most everyone can support, but also inspires others to do likewise.—*Anna Groff*

For college students

The Mennonite is a great way for your college students to connect with the Mennonite church and nurture their spiritual lives—wherever they attend school. By regularly reading *The Mennonite,* these future leaders of the church will understand where the church has been, where it is going and how they can participate.

For **only $22 each** you can send your student copies of *The Mennonite* from October through April. Just submit your student's address information with the handy form at **www.TheMennonite.org. Deadline is Sept. 22.**

CALENDAR

Peach Cobbler Mennonite Relief Auction, Sept. 12-13. Benefits Mennonite Central Committee and Christian Aid Ministries work around the world. **Georgia Living Building, Georgia National Fairgrounds, Perry, Georgia.** 404-344-5012 or 478-262-1175.

Sister Helen Prejean, author of the book *"Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in the United States,"* will speak at **Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.**, on Oct. 11 and 12. For more information go to www.salfordmc.org; phone: 215-256-0778; email: mail@salfordmc.org.

Lancaster Mennonite School will welcome alumni and friends back to campus Fri. and Sat., Sept. 26 and 27, with a ***Fall Festival & Homecoming***. For more information and to register for sporting events, go to lancastermennonite.org or call 717-394-7107.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bishop, Nicholas James, Aug. 13, to Zachary Bishop and Christina Alderfer, Denver, Colo.

Eby, Kona Kyder, June 2, to Matthew and Kim Erickson Eby, Washington, D.C.

Entz, Abigail Grace, March 9, to Jeremy and Stephanie Miller Entz, Newton, Kan.

Klingenberg, Makayla Joy, April 23, to Derek and Kara Kaufman Klingenberg, Peabody, Kan.

Kurtz, Elisa Cristina Marie, born June 18 in El Paso, Texas. Received for adoption on June 23 by Eric and Carmen Horst Kurtz, Goshen, Ind.

O'Keefe, Morganne, July 12, to Mike and Kim King O'Keefe, Kouts, Ind.

Sweigart, Elizabeth Rae, July 12, to Jon and Lisa Britton Sweigart, Philadelphia.

Unruh, Cammi Jo, Aug. 8, to Chris and Nicole Niehage Unruh, Moundridge, Kan.

Wahl, Gavin Alexander, July 5, to Ryan and Rachel Klippenstein Wahl, Altona, Manitoba.

Wiens, Dawson Carter, May 28, to Joe and Amanda Hiebert Wiens, Altona, Manitoba.

Wolf, Landon Alexander, born April 26. Received for adoption on June 9 by Kevin and Tara Zuercher Wolf, Pendleton, Ind.

Yoder, Emmet Carlisle, Aug. 8, to Aaron and Melinda Esch Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.

MARRIAGES

Adrian/Birky: Russell Adrian, Butterfield, Minn., and Camille Birky, Detroit Lakes, Minn., July 19, at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Amstutz/Jones: Kari Ann Amstutz, Pulaski, Iowa, and Linzy Jones, Pulaski, June 13, at Pulaski Mennonite Church.

Ankney/Lansinger: Matthew Ankney and Kimberly Lansinger, Lancaster, Pa., July 13, at Landis Valley Farm Museum, Lancaster.

Beachy/Cobb: Daniel Beachy, Hartville, Ohio, and Whitney Cobb, Uniontown, Ohio, Aug. 1, at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Bergey/Ferguson: Erin Bergey, Harrisonburg, Va., and Andrew Ferguson, Harrisonburg, July 12, at Mt. Pleasant Mennonite Church, Chesapeake, Va.

Clayton/Schroeder: Cory Clayton, Darlinford, Manitoba, and Macy Schroeder, Altona, Manitoba, Aug. 16, at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Detweiler/Harney: Jessica Detweiler, Souderton, Pa., and Daniel Harney, Souderton, Aug. 9, at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Duhe/Horst: Jacqueline Duhe, LaPlace, La., and Andrew Horst, Newton, Kan., Aug. 2, at an ocean front park in San Francisco, Calif.

Enns/Rodine: Erika Enns, Altona, Manitoba, and Josh Rodine, Dawson Creek, British Columbia, May 17, at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Falk/Friesen: Nathan Falk, Altona, Manitoba, and Mandy Friesen, Altona, Aug. 2, at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Fast/Friesen: Ryan Fast, Altona, Manitoba, and Jennifer Friesen, Gretna, Manitoba, June 21, at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Friesen/Voth: Justin Friesen, Altona, Manitoba, and Daphne Voth, Altona, June 14, at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Hirschler/Honderich: Stephanie Hirschler and Michael Honderich, Goshen, Ind., June 7, at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hollinger/Yoder: Amber Hurst Hollinger, Kalispell, Mont., and Mitch Reid Yoder, Oskaloosa, Iowa, Aug. 2, in Kalispell.

Johnson/Swartz: Hannah Johnson, Harrisonburg, Va., and Ian Swartz, Harrisonburg, Aug. 2, at Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Johnson/Vander Ploeg: Kira Johnson, Denver, Colo., and Pete Vander Ploeg, Denver, July 12, at Peace Mennonite Church, Aurora, Colo.

Kratz/Showalter: Mary Kratz, Harrisonburg, Va., and Millard Showalter, Harrisonburg, June 21, at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

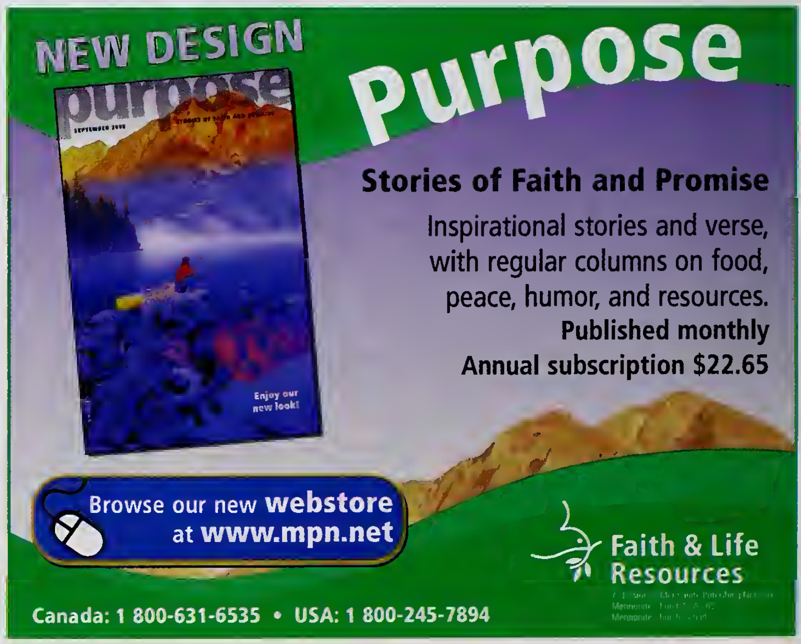
Madison/Peters: Sarah Madison, Kalispell, Mont., and Josh Peters, Kalispell, July 26, at Flathead Lake, Kalispell.

Raleigh/Simmering: Morgan Raleigh, Hesston, Kan., and Luke Simmering, Hesston, Aug. 8, at Hesston Mennonite Church.

DEATHS

Beachy, Henry, 92, Kalona, Iowa, died Aug. 5. Spouse: Alma Slabach Beachy. Parents: Menno and Mary Troyer Beachy. Children: Mary Litwiller, Emma Simmons, Merle; eight grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 8 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Birkey, Frances M. Hieser, 93, Gibson City, Ill., died July 15. Spouse: Clarence L. Birkey (deceased). Parents: John and Mary Hieser. Children: Warren, Susie Oyer; one grandchild; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 18 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.


NEW DESIGN

Purpose

Stories of Faith and Promise

Inspirational stories and verse, with regular columns on food, peace, humor, and resources.

Published monthly

Annual subscription $22.65

Browse our new webstore at www.mpn.net

Faith & Life Resources

Canada: 1 800-631-6535 • USA: 1 800-245-7894

Birky, Marjorie Eula Lais, 83, Kalispell, Mont., died July 23. Spouse: Ezra Birky. Parents: Daniel and Ellen Egli Lais. Children: Ian, Michael, Ellen Lehman, Susan Birky, Vance; 12 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 28 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Kalispell.

Calhoun, Donald G., 70, Gordonville, Pa., died July 28. Spouse: Janet L. Umble Calhoun. Parents: Virgil and Mary Haga Calhoun. Children: Hazel Bennethum, Jeffrey, Michael T., Donald; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 31 at Hershey Mennonite Church, Kinzers, Pa.

Christy, Grace Katzenmoyer, 83, Lansdale, Pa., died Aug. 4 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Paul Wilson Christy (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Ella Katzenmoyer. Children: Paul, Howard; eight grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 7 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Eash, Maynard Leroy, 79, Wellman, Iowa, died Aug. 9. Spouse: Ada Mae Swartzendruber Eash. Spouse: Elaine Roth Eash (deceased). Parents: Amelius and Dorothy Rensberger Eash. Children: Randall, Rita Peachey, Ruby Kern, Roberta Kandel, Suzanne Moser, Karla Mabarak, Kevin Yoder; six grandchildren; five step-grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 12 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Godshall, Stella Moyer, 92, Souderton, Pa., died Aug. 4. Spouse: Paul A. Godshall. Parents: Alvin and Lizzie Bergey Moyer. Children: Miriam Godshall, Lourene Bender, Stanley, Philip; 11 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 8 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Goertz, Henry Arnold, 59, Bristol, Ind., died June 28 of cancer. Spouse: Alice Loree Miller Goertz. Parents: Ernest and Elma Goertzen Goertz. Children: Jeremiah, Marvin, Isaiah; two grandchildren. Funeral: July 6 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Graber, Joseph A., 76, Goshen, Ind., died July 25. Spouse: Dora Troyer Graber. Parents: Abraham and Katie Marner Graber. Children: Joseph Scott, Jeff, Ted, Tonya Eveler; 13 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 29 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Herner, Charlene Ann, 77, Kalona, Iowa, died Aug. 1. Parents: Edwin and Marie Miller Herner. Funeral: Aug. 4 at Peterseim Funeral Home, Kalona.

Hershey, Dorothy G., 87 Lancaster, Pa., died July 5. Parents: Isaac E. and Esther Brackbill Hershey. Funeral: July 9 at Hershey Mennonite Church, Kinzers, Pa.

Histand, Ivan G., 56, Perkasie, Pa., died Aug. 4. Spouse: Martene L. Mussleman Histand. Parents: Claude and Arlene Alderfer Histand. Children: Tonya Histand, Megan Histand; one grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 9 at Blooming Glen Mennonite Church, Blooming Glen, Pa.

Hoeppner, Harry, 62, Winkler, Manitoba, died June 7. Parents: Henry and Anne Penner Hoeppner. Funeral: Wiebe's Funeral Home, Winkler.

Hofer, Jake M., 87, Freeman, S.D., died Aug. 11. Spouse: Anna Gross Hofer. Parents: Jacob J. and Margaret Mendel Hofer. Child: Ilene Schartner. Funeral: Aug. 14 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church.

Knopp, Cathy S., 57, Albion, Ind., died July 30. Parents: John H. and Helen Todd Knopp. Funeral: Aug. 2 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana, Ohio.

Lint, Charles E., Jr., 84, Scottdale, Pa., died Aug. 9. Parents: Charles E. Sr. and LuLu Belle Tressler Lint. Funeral: Aug. 13 at Frank Kapr Funeral Home, Scottdale.

Schmidt, Grace Vivian, 88, Marion, S.D., died Aug. 6. Parents: Gerhard G. Emma Schmidt. Funeral: Aug. 11 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Schulz, Leonard, 86, Altona, Manitoba, died June 22. Spouse: Susan Reddekopp Schulz. Parents: David and Katherine Friesen Schulz. Children: Richard, Judy Klassen, Rosella Weimer, Alvin, Gerald; 13 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 26 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Showalter, Paul Gabriel, 69, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 30. Spouse: Betty Shifflet Showalter. Parents: Clark Anthony and Viola Heatwole Showalter. Children: Cheryl Ann Showalter Parker, Jill Annette Showalter Fries, Paula Gail Showalter Brown; eight grandchildren. Funeral: July 3 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Siemens-Rhodes, Willa Esperanza, lived seven minutes, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 11 of Trisomy 18 "Edward's Syndrome." Parents: Mitch and Heidi Siemens-Rhodes. Siblings: Theo, Adam. Funeral: Aug. 16 at Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Goshen.

Stuckey, Chauncey Howard, 90, Archbold, Ohio, died Aug. 1. Spouse: Pearl Stuckey Stuckey. Parents: Peter J. and Anna Short Stuckey. Children: Richard, Larry; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 5 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Unruh, Lou Isla Belle Cummings, 85, Hesston, Kan., died July 31. Spouse: Raymond Lee Unruh (deceased). Parents: Howard and Mildred Saurbaugh Cummings. Funeral: Aug. 5 at Schowalter Villa Chapel, Hesston.

Vogts, Roger, 65, Moundridge, Kan., died Aug. 8 of a heart attack. Parents: Herman and Frieda Flickner Vogts. Children: Brian, Brandon, Duane Helms, Dwight Helms; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 12 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge, Kan.

Weaver, Phyllis B. Young, 79, Brewster, Ohio, died July 28 following an extended battle with cancer. Spouse: Jacob M. Weaver. Parents: Lester and Virgie Blanton Young. Children: Larry W., Roy "Arkie," Carrie Fannin; seven grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 1 at Longenecker Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Ina B. Yoder, 86, West Liberty, Ohio, died July 20. Spouse: Everett B. Yoder. Parents: Floyd R. and Kathryn B. Plank Yoder. Children: R. Michael, Suzanne Troyer, Kathy Short, Anne Troyer, Sara King, Matt, Mark, Roger, Jeff; 27 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 26 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

Specializing in web development and customized software
Donate online to Mennonite congregations and organiza...
https://giving.mennoniteusa.org/
My Account
Complete My Gift
Home
About Us
FAQs
Giving Contacts
Organizations & Projects
Mennonite Church USA
Donate online to Mennonite congregations and organizations
LIGHTSKY
www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

The **Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church of Altona, Manitoba**, is inviting applications to fill the role of ***lead pastor***. Our congregation has approximately 500 members and three pastors. The role includes inspiring the spiritual growth of the congregation, staff and leaders through Biblical teaching, mentoring and personal relationships. Please send resumés or inquiries to: Frank Friesen, Pastor Search Committee Chairperson at frankf@mts.net.

Associate pastor for youth ministry, half-time position. Growing congregation, Rocky Mountains! For details contact Bruce Kuhns, 719-596-1718. **Beth-El Mennonite Church**, Colorado Springs, Colo.

ASSETS Montco seeks ***administrative supervisor*** in Norristown, Pa. 1-3 years of experience minimum, 3-5 years of experience preferred or minimum of an associates degree from an accredited university in business related field. Proficiency in QuickBooks and MS Office, strong writing and editing skills, willingness to travel to local meetings and trainings, 1-3 years grant writing and fundraising experience a plus. Must live in or near Norristown, Pa. Call 610-275-3520 or email: cbudd@assetsmontco.org.

Eastern Mennonite Missions seeks ***50 percent print and multimedia designer***; prefer skills in HTML, Flash, Photoshop, GoLive/Dreamweaver and InDesign. Associate's degree or two years' experience required. Apply by Sept. 15, 2008; begins Oct. 13. Contact Jeanette Hunt at jeanetteh@emm.org or 717-898-2251.

The **Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio** located in Bluffton, Ohio seeks a ***CEO*** to lead its 16-acre campus with independent housing, assisted living and a 92-bed health-care facility. Qualified candidates should have senior leadership experience in large organizations, strong financial knowledge, ability to develop a productive work culture consistent with organizational values, board experience and a passion for the organization's mission. Interested candidates should contact Kim Allen with MHS Alliance at Kim@StiffneyGroup.com or 574-537-8736.

***Ski youth retreat package*, Timberline Four Seasons Resort, W.Va.**, starting at $99 a night plus tax. Includes lodging, meals, lifts, skis, lesson. Info: www.timberlineresort.com; 800-392-0152. West Virginia Wild and Wonderful.

Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College, Wolflake, Ind., is a nature preserve known for its wetlands and its theological reflection on earth-keeping. ***Register now for: Beyond the Front Porch: Finding Our Place in Nature, Sept. 19-21; Nature Photography Workshop, Oct. 9-12***. See www.goshen.edu/merrylea, call 260-799-5869 or email jenniferhs@goshen.edu.

Volunteer host and hostess needed at **Menno-Hof** for a three-month to one-year term beginning Oct. 1, 2008. Furnished one-bedroom apartment, groceries and small stipend provided. For more information, contact Joseph Yoder, PO Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 45665; 260-768-4117 or jyoder@mennohof.org.

English conversation teachers needed. Connexus, a **Korea Anabaptist Center** ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Ridgeview Mennonite Church, an MCUSA/Atlantic Coast Conference congregation located in Intercourse, Pa., is searching for a ***one-half to full-time person to serve as a pastoral team member*** focusing in youth and young adult ministry. For more information and a ministry description, please contact Ridgeview Mennonite Church at ridgeviewchurch@frontiernet.net or call 717-768-3143.

MAX® isn't for everyone

But it could be for you.

MAX® has a defined membership but more than that, MAX is for someone who shares our values and commitment to *wholeness*.

If you're interested in using your insurance* dollar to go above and beyond settling claims *and* to help others in need or...if you like the fact that your insurance company invests responsibly and in accordance to the teachings of the church—you need to give MAX a call.

*Insurance products provided by MutualAid eXchange (MAX) and MAX Insurance Agency, Inc.

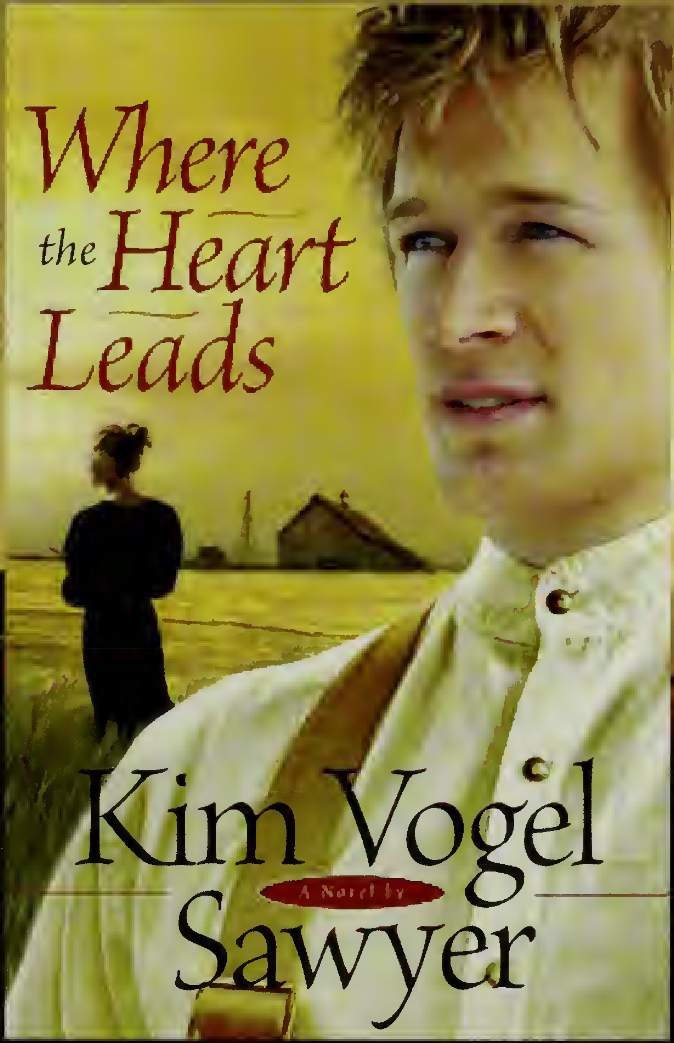
MAX membership has its benefits—to you *and* others.
Contact us today to learn more.

HOME ● FARM ● CHURCH ● BUSINESS ● AUTO
877-971-6300 ● www.maxwholeness.com

MAX® *Creating and Sustaining* WHOLENESS™

New From
Kim Vogel Sawyer!

IN THE TRADITION OF
JANETTE OKE AND BEVERLY LEWIS


Where the Heart Leads
Kim Vogel
A Novel by
Sawyer

Torn between his Mennonite roots and his love for the city, Thomas' future seems uncertain. When his prayers are answered with silence, can he trust his heart to lead?

Where the Heart Leads by Kim Vogel Sawyer

BETHANYHOUSE

www.bethanyhouse.com
Available at your local bookstore or by calling 1-866-241-6733

Training for the Olympics

Sara Wenger Shenk is an author and serves as associate dean and associate professor of Christian practices at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

I've been impressed of late with what an astounding quality kindness is. It used to sound like one of those wimpy virtues that were all about being nice. For anyone who wanted to make their mark in the world, kindness was more or less optional. It didn't have pride of place like liberty and justice for all. It surely didn't rank with loving enemies and waging peace.

But now I see things in a new light. Perhaps it's because at this stage of life I know more about how I need other people to help me "walk the mile and bear the load." Perhaps it's because rudeness has achieved raucous prominence by radio and TV talk show hosts and increasingly in daily discourse. Perhaps it's because selfishness seems more and more to be in the air and water all around us. For whatever multiplicity of reasons, I am blown away by simple acts of kindness.

One evening, with two young adult children home for our Saturday evening cheese fondue, we caught up with news on multiple fronts. Several of us who had been at the beach for the week missed the opening ceremonies for the Olympics. Our son regaled us with the story of the gigantic Chinese basketball star, Yao Ming, who led the Chinese team of athletes into the arena. Beside him, holding his hand was a tiny, second-grade boy—a survivor from the Sichuan quake zone. Not only had this little boy managed to crawl out of his collapsed school, he also helped carry out two of his classmates. Our son reported that when asked why, even though injured, he had gone back into the dangerous rubble to bring others out, the boy replied, "I was the hall monitor. It was my job to look after my schoolmates."

After hearing this, we sat in stunned silence around the table. My eyes welled up. There's something that makes the heart sing when a gesture of courageous kindness steals the show on such a grand occasion. The fireworks were nice. The kindness of that boy was stupendous.

But what of more mundane kindness? I remember something of its unraveling. There were acts of courtesy that had become pro forma, like guys opening doors for girls. Some of us scorned this gesture because we considered it a remnant of patriarchy. And in some ways it was. But now, when someone pushes through the door ahead of me and doesn't even notice I'm there, I'm reminded of how such small gestures schooled us on a daily basis to look out for another's interest above our own. Oh, you say, what an exaggerated extrapolation to make from something as simple as holding a door open. Well, perhaps. But I know that I now often hold doors open for others in large part because of the courtesy shown me by the men in my life who thoughtfully did so for me. There's no need for this kindness to be gender based, but to lose it because of gender politics is a great loss.

And whatever happened to table manners? I remember little sayings: "Mabel, Mabel strong and able. Get your elbows off the table. This is not a horse's stable." And other formative instructions: Be on time so you don't keep everyone else waiting. Wait to be seated until everyone has arrived. Bow your head for the table grace. Chew with your mouth closed. Wait to begin your dessert until everyone is served. Don't interrupt when someone else is talking. Take only your fair share so there's enough to go around. And carefully divide second helpings so everyone is taken into consideration.

With practice in ordinary routines, we may eventually learn to share food with the poor and welcome the outsider through the door.

Again, I know table etiquette can be painfully overdone. But consideration for others gathered around the table is evident in each of the illustrations above. Eating together can be a delightful communal experience, teaching us in small ways on a daily basis how to be respectful of others. As we share food with kind consideration for everyone around the table, mealtimes become profoundly formative in ways that extend far beyond the table.

John Witvliet of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship talks about how we learn to say "please" and "thank you" and "I'm sorry" and "bless you." We learn these around the table, and in holding doors open for each other, repeated over and over, first by our parents. Eventually they become part of the way we navigate relationships. When they are left unpracticed, families break apart and marriages fail. Witvliet calls these "vertical habits" because they also teach us to worship—to say "thank you" and "I'm sorry" to God.

Why spend time on such mundane habits? How do they matter in the grand scheme of things? It is precisely with these little gestures that we train for the bigger things. With practice in ordinary routines, we may eventually learn to share food with the poor and welcome the outsider through the door. We may learn to share kindness on an Olympic scale. TM

Making Sense of the Journey: The Geography of Our Faith, edited by Robert Lee and Nancy V. Lee (Anabaptist Center for Religion and Society, 2007, $17.95), includes Mennonite stories integrating faith and life and the world of thought.

Neglected Voices: Peace in the Old Testament by David A. Leiter (Herald Press, 2008, $16.99) explores passages in which God calls for the making of peace and shows the Old Testament's relevance to today's struggles for peace.

Send Forth Your Light: A Vision for Peace, Mission and Worship by William M. Swartley (Herald Press, 2008, $18.99) views peace and mission, both at the heart of Jesus' gospel, foremost as God's gift.

Simply Enough: Straight Talk from Tony Campolo and Shane Claiborne on Simple, Just Living (DVD, 2008, $17) is a personal dialogue about voluntary simplicity. It's available from www.SimplyLiving.org, 800-821-6153.

The Words of Jesus: A Gospel of the Sayings of Our Lord by Phyllis Tickle (Jossey-Bass/Wiley, 2008, $22.95) compiles and orders all the "red-letter" verses of Jesus' sayings from the Gospels to help readers experience a more embodied and direct encounter with the author of these words and their meanings and message.

From Stone to Living Word: Letting the Bible Live Again by Debbie Blue (Brazos Press, 2008, $16.99) draws from her own and others' stories to explore some better-known biblical accounts in a new way.

Music as Prayer: Gateway to the Soul by Christine Nafziger (2008, $22 plus $2.13 shipping) includes a booklet and CD with 12 songs. Order from nafzigerpnc@hotmail.com, 1147 Wooster Road, Millersburg, OH 44654, 330-674-1706.

News to Me: Gospel Stories for the Real World by Lawrence Wood (Westminster John Knox Press, 2008, $16.95) brings together insights from Scripture with Wood's observations of the "real world"—including the lives of famous and not-so-famous people and observations of popular culture—to offer a fresh look at the gospel at work in everyday life.

Jesus the Village Psychiatrist by Donald Capps (Westminster John Knox Press, 2008, $19.95) argues that one of Jesus' purposes was to heal people from mental illnesses, which the ancient world would have seen manifested in physical ailments such as blindness, paralysis or other symptoms.

JFK and the Unspeakable: Why He Died and Why It Matters by James W. Douglass (Orbis Books, 2008, $30) lays out the journey that led JFK in the course of three years from his position as a traditional Cold Warrior to his determination to break with the logic of the Cold War and lead the world in an entirely different direction. This sequence of steps led his adversaries in the military and intelligence establishment to view him as a virtual traitor who had to be eliminated.

Stories With Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus by Klyne R. Snodgrass (Eerdmans, 2008, $50) explores in vivid detail the context in which these stories were told, the purpose they had in Jesus' message and the ways they have been interpreted by the church and modern scholarship.

Ancient Christian Devotional: A Year of Weekly Readings, edited by Cindy Crosby (IVP Books, 2007, $17), excerpts writings from the church fathers in a weekly format.

TMail
An e-zine of The Mennonite magazine
TMail

Mennonite Mondays:

Start every week with updates on the latest Mennonite happenings. Sign up for *TMail*—the free, weekly ezine with Web-exclusive stories and blog updates as well as breaking news.

To sign up, visit
www.themennonite.org

Or send your request to
TMail@themennonite.org
providing your email address.

****************FIRM CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 889 15-DEC-09 66994 S32 P5
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

Story power

A single powerful story can affect generations of people that follow. Sometimes such a story creates a movement and a set of convictions. Analyzing the stories that are foundational to our faith can reinforce the values woven into our faith.

Each of our family systems has stories that help define who we are. Each congregation has stories that create a historical context for the arguments and reconciliations of today. Our country has stories that form the fabric of our identity—from the Boston Tea Party to slave auctions to landing on the moon. But for Christians, the most important stories are those that put a flesh-and-blood reality on to the way God wants us to live.

One such story is that of Amishman Jacob Hochstetler.

The Hochstetler family, living on the edge of the Blue Mountains in Pennsylvania, was attacked by Delaware and Shawnee Indians in September 1757. The family hid in the cellar as the attackers burned their house. But the family was eventually discovered. Mrs. Hochstetler, an infant girl and Jacob Jr. were killed. Jacob Sr. and sons Joseph and Christian were taken captive.

The two oldest children, John and Barbara, were married and not involved in the attack.

Analyzing stories can reinforce the values woven into our faith.

Given the tensions along the “frontier” in colonial Pennsylvania and the way Native American tribes were used by both sides during the French and Indian War, such incidents were common in the 1750s. Other Mennonite and Amish families were also attacked during this period. But it was a decision made by Jacob Hochstetler that established this story as the seminal moment for many of his descendants. He prohibited his two sons—both of whom were excellent marksmen—from using the rifles and ample ammunition in their house to defend themselves from the attackers.

The story is so powerful that it has created a growing network of descendants and a kind of cottage industry. On Aug. 2 I attended the nationwide gathering in Goshen, Ind., of the Jacob Hochstetler Family Association. Nearly 600 people spent the day examining every facet of the story and debating various questions left unresolved.

Much of the focus was on genealogy: how many ways to track our ancestry back to a member of the Hochstetler family. Most intriguing was a presentation by James Hostetler. He introduced his database, which currently has in it 324,112 descendants of Jacob Hochstetler and 123,795 spouses of those descendants. But his database was just one of eight available for genealogical research.

The gathering also featured vendors selling various books related to the 1757 attack as well as artwork depicting the event. And most conspicuous were the stars on our nametags: We each received a gold star to place under the name(s) of the Hochstetler children from whom we descended: John, Barbara, Joseph and Christian. Some sported more than one star.

The problem with this “family reunion”—and even writing about it—is that it leaves many people out. The flip side is that the story has remained as an enduring inspiration for generations.

As I soaked up the enthusiasm for the “Jacob Hochstetler Family Attack” story, it occurred to me that Christians gather symbolically—and eventually in heaven—around another story. It includes everyone: Jesus’ life, death and resurrection is the seminal story in the universe. That story has created cultures, institutions and—some would say—nations. At times the details of the story and the meanings of his words have been so important that people fought wars over them. Others were martyred when they refused to accept certain interpretations of the Bible.

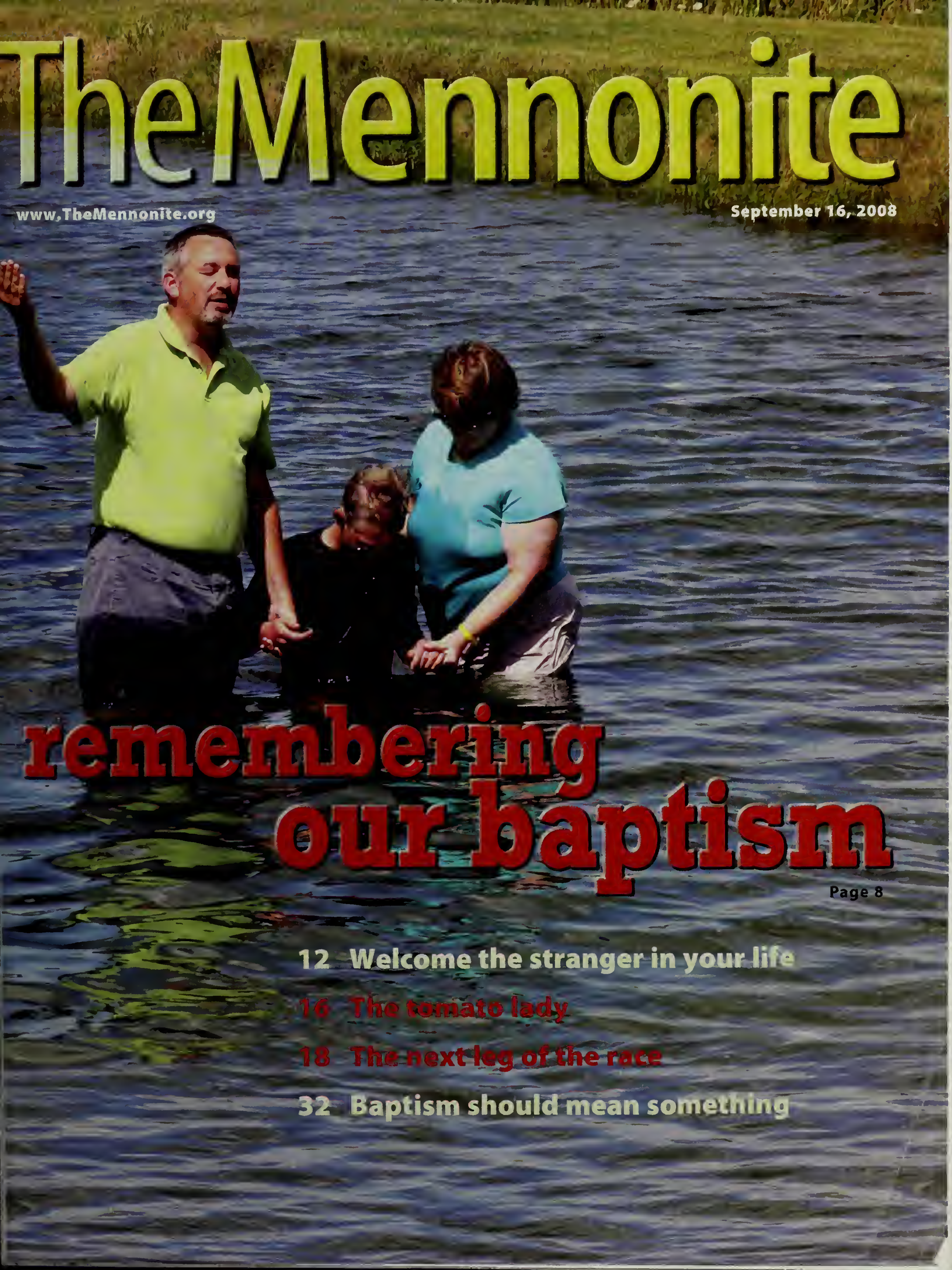
The power of this story—Jesus’ teachings and his selfless death on the cross—framed Jacob Hochstetler’s decision the fateful day in September 251 years ago.

Any of us who are descendants of this Amishman—and any who are inspired by his actions—can best honor his sacrifice by placing the Jesus story similarly at the center of our actions, words and lives.—*ejt*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK



TheMennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

September 16, 2008

remembering our baptism

Page 8

12 Welcome the stranger in your life

16 The tomato lady

18 The next leg of the race

32 Baptism should mean something

A fugitive church

Isaac Villegas is pastor of Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship

Bare, white walls. Clean linoleum floors. Hints of disinfectant in the air. I rounded the corner on my way to Cameron's room in the stroke unit of the hospital. To my delight and surprise, I saw Tom waiting in the hall while a nurse met with Cameron. I don't know why I was surprised that people from church would pay him a visit.

After waiting in the hall a few minutes, Tom and I went in to see Cameron. In that sterile environment, church happened. Though Cameron's stroke kept him from coming to church that Sunday, the church had come to his hospital room. After our preliminary greeting, I said half-jokingly, "I guess I should find a pulpit and preach, since it's beginning to look like church around here."

When I visited Cameron over the next few weeks, I found the church already there. Once I apparently arrived late and found Jaso and his friend gathered around Cameron's bed—one playing the fiddle, the other plucking her banjo. I guess the order of worship that afternoon included a time for special music. And from the look on Cameron's face, it was special music.

I stumbled into the "fugitive ecclesia." That's what Peter Dula, a Mennonite theologian at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., calls it in his forthcoming book, *Beautiful Enemies*. Fugitive ecclesia describes what happens, writes Dula, "in the occasional intimacy of two or three." While many theologians and church leaders laud the virtues of community, Dula wonders about "the space between the individual and the community." He worries that we have forgotten about the messy work of companionship with two or three and Christ's promised presence between them. Instead of looking for programs to create vibrant church community, we learn how to linger with two or three wherever fellowship happens—as in a hospital room. The fugitive ecclesia defies premeditation, calculation and scheduling.

Sometimes church just happens. Christ shows up with unexpected people in surprising moments. And the fellowship that happens in these moments is our communion in the fugitive ecclesia. As Jesus put it, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20).

Our communion in Christ's Spirit is not a possession, something we can make happen with the right new pastor or a new initiative. Disciples aren't magicians who wave wands and cast spells to make the Spirit fall and conjure a community. Instead, Christ is a beckoning presence, and we follow by stumbling into the alluring grace of the Holy Spirit, which comes with a companion, with the intimacy of two or three.

The resurrected Jesus appeared as a stranger to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24). The disciples welcomed the stranger as a companion. With preoccupied minds and after a long day of walking, the disciples lingered with their companion over a meal. Unexpectedly, their hearts burned. They sat overwhelmed with the communion of divine love. But as soon as they could name it and claim it, Jesus disappeared. The love they felt was real. It was true communion. But it was fugitive—gone as quickly as it came. Without a warning, church happened.

Whenever I saw Cameron in the hospital, he told me who came by that day. My heart was strangely warmed as I noticed how his lists soon matched the church membership roll. Those are the "church attendance" numbers that matter. Many attended these instances of fugitive ecclesia. But usually this kind of communion slips from our gaze. We don't notice. It's fugitive, after all. Who knows where it might happen next?

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 18, September 16, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN
SEP 19 '08

20

7

17

8

8 Remembering our baptism
The number of young people raised in Mennonite families and baptized into the faith who leave the church seems to be rising.—*John D. Roth*

12 Welcome the stranger in your life
Why we should stop avoiding the strangers in our midst and start welcoming them—*Jan Johnson*

14 Holy Spirit of Jesus
A look at the Holy Spirit Jesus promised in the Gospel of John—*C. Norman Kraus*

16 The tomato lady
How one barely noticed woman used her tomato harvest to help youth go on a mission trip—*Pamela Gilsenan*

19 Mexican gathering promotes fellowship

20 Native assembly seeks justice, shalom

21 IMH assembly 'goes into the other side'

22 Drought, high food prices hit Ethiopians

23 Common-law couples wed in Ecuador

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
A fugitive church—*Isaac Villegas*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Leadership
The next leg of the race—*James Schrag*

27 For the record

30 Mediaculture
Biomedicine: servant or master?—*Gordon Houser*

32 Editorial
Baptism should mean something—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover photography: Len Harms

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Sunday school only way for Biblical literacy

Thanks for the articles in the Aug. 19 issue concerning Sunday school. An issue I do not hear being addressed is the widespread decline in biblical literacy in our local congregations. George Lindbeck has observed that when he entered Yale College in the late 1930s, the average freshman had more biblical knowledge than the first-year student entering Yale Divinity School in the 1990s. We cannot depend on American culture to maintain a basic knowledge of the biblical narrative. In spite of strong efforts on the part of our curriculum designers—starting with the children's curriculum—to provide engaging materials, the powerful cultural undertow is taking its toll. So far as I can see, Sunday school remains the only means by which we might address this trend.—*Wilbert Shenk, Elkhart, Ind.*

Choices determine health-care cost

The escalating—seemingly out-of-control—health-care-cost crisis is easily solved. It is about "overutilization." It is about "supply and demand." If we don't go to the doctor, the problem is solved. It's that simple. But is this possible?

What causes us to go to the doctor? We are sick or injured. Why are we sick or injured? What can we do to keep from getting sick or injured? How do we eliminate or reduce the risk of getting sick or injured? Do we have any control over this or does it just happen?

Do you wear your seat belt? Do you use your cell phone while you drive? Do you drive with excessive speed? Do you wear your motorcycle or bicycle helmet? Do you smoke? Do you drink too much? Do you eat too much? Do you watch too much TV? Do you participate in risky behavior? Do you have multiple partners?

Over 50 percent of the U.S. population is overweight. Is this a result of a sedentary and gluttonous lifestyle? Poor food choices? Diabetes, high blood pressure, acid reflux, heart disease, cancer, high cholesterol, anxiety and depression can all be the result of lifestyle choices. Whose fault is this? Who's making the choices? Wake up. It is our fault. Yes, our choices are our responsibility.

The answer is so simple. We can dramatically reduce our utilization and cost of health care by diet, exercise and changing our behavioral patterns. Whatever happened to moderation in all things? I am convinced that if we all practice wellness, there will be less cost and plenty of care for those that really need health care. If you are able and are not practicing wellness, you are the problem. Quit stalling and get busy.—*Bill Beck, Archbold, Ohio*

No more church as usual

Regarding "No More Church as Usual" by Gerald and Sara Wenger Shenk (Aug. 19): I do not question that many people find church meaningless. I do have a problem reading of a new church plant effort intended to address such issues when it is located in a large Mennonite community with many large Mennonite churches, a university and a seminary. Beginning a new church will have little or no impact on the churches that exist while the people who are in this new effort forge ahead in new and uncharted directions.

I would suggest that the Wenger Shenks take a sabbatical from teaching duties and pastor a church for a few years in some remote location where people are not flocking there with university degrees coming out of their ears. When they are there, they will find that young people leave the area to find gainful employment, since it does not exist locally. The local church struggles to carry on and be a witness in a needy community that is losing many of its most promising youth.

When the Wenger Shenks return to their teaching duties, they will then be much better equipped to help potential ministerial candidates deal with reality when they enter the pastoral ministry.

I have one question about churches that are established to be relevant to the needs of the people. Why do some people who are the most adamant that something new must happen and then become part of such an effort end up leaving these churches after a period of time to go to some other denomination? Did reality not meet their expectations?—*Kenneth Cressman, New Hamburg, Ont.*

IN THIS ISSUE

One of the core elements of Mennonite belief and practice has to do with baptism. *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* calls baptism of believers with water "a sign of their cleansing from sin" and "a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk in the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit." John Roth (page 8) asks if we are taking that covenant seriously in our congregations. Jan Johnson (page 12) calls us to be more welcoming of visitors to our worship services. Norman Kraus (page 14) offers biblical teaching about the Holy Spirit and Jesus from the Gospel of John. And Pamela Gilsenan (page 16) tells a charming and provocative story about a woman who used tomatoes to raise money for youth. Our news section offers stories of meetings of Mennonites in Mexico (page 19), Native and Hispanic Mennonites (pages 20-21) and even a Mennonite retreat for writers (page 24).—*Associate editor*

Smorgasbord of beliefs
I read with appreciation "Bringing Back the Wonder of Childhood" (Aug. 5). But I was a bit uneasy with the "undenominational" tone, quoting Charles Swindoll, who is well-known in Mennonite circles. The recommended Web sites carry a smorgasbord of beliefs and practices.—*Kathryn Aschliman, Goshen, Ind.*

Thanks for articles
I just want to express my appreciation for two articles in the July 22 issue of *The Mennonite*. These are "Election Year Musings" by our good friend David A. Shank and "God's Communication Style Is Kenotic" by Ted Lewis. I have put this issue of *The Mennonite* with my devotional materials to refer to again and again—hopefully to have a real impact on my actions. Thanks.—*Elvina Martens Elkhart, Ind.*

Corporate influence on church
The proposed restructuring of Mennonite Church USA reminds me of two occasions in which corporate ways of doing the work of the church were strongly promoted. The first happened at a strategy consultation meeting in the Brazil Mennonite Conference. One of the church leaders, who had extensive experience in the business world, repeatedly suggested that the church should be organized on the business model. The second occurred when a member of the board for Mennonite Board of Missions—who had extensive involvement in a large corporation—told staff, "If the missionaries and staff do the appropriate inputs we can anticipate statistically significant outputs."

It appears that the influence of the corporate world has become strong in the church today. Otherwise, how do we understand why a corporate structure is being proposed? Is this not in conflict with our ecclesiology? Furthermore, is it not amazing that the proposed role and authority of the executive director and Executive Board are reminiscent of the strong bishop and board type authority that was practiced in parts of the denomination previously?—*Lawrence Greaser, Goshen, Ind.*

Be the change we wish to see in the world
Jim Compton-Schmidt makes several excellent points regarding Jesus and anger in the Aug. 19 Reader's Say. I would add that the best-known display of Jesus' anger—the cleansing of the temple—was likely motivated primarily by Jesus' feelings about the merchants' occupation of the Court of the Gentiles.

I would also suggest that Compton-Schmidt missed the main point of the article to which he was responding, "Passionate (Not Angry) Peacemakers." The essence of my article was not that "anger has no place in doing peace" but that our character and behavior should reflect the changes we wish to see in our broader societies. As I concluded in the last paragraph of the article, "God is at work transforming the world. If we want a more peaceful and just world, we need to become more just, peaceable and loving individuals and communities. Therefore, let us commit, with God's help, to being the change we wish to see in the world."

I agree with Jim that not only did Jesus get angry at injustice but also that we should sometimes do likewise. Anger can be a powerful short-term motivator, as well as part of a principled approach to peacemaking. But ongoing rage is not sufficient to sustain a long-term commitment to peacebuilding and tends to repel rather than attract the allies that we need to bring about change. Perhaps giving an answer with gentleness and respect even while angry is one standard of a Christian peacemaker. This is hard work, and since none of us will always succeed, it requires both personal humility and community support.
—*David Brubaker, Harrisonburg, Va.*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

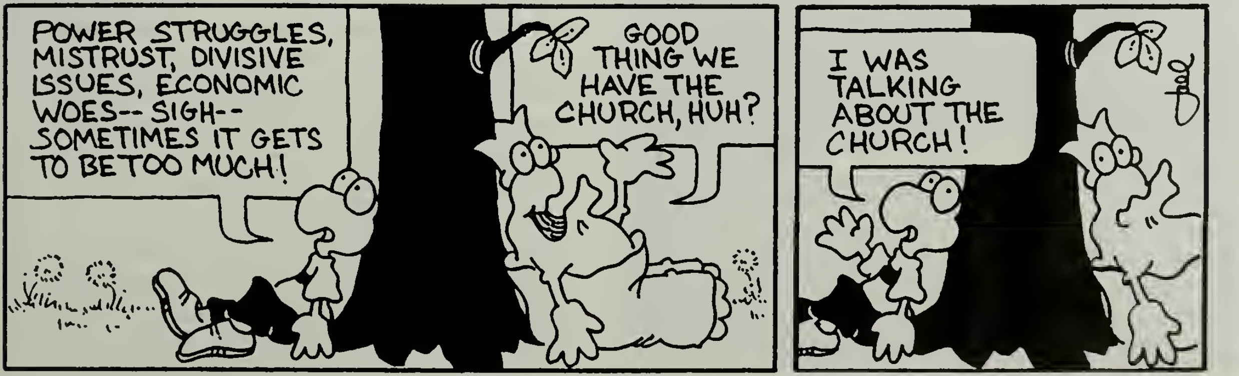
Baptismal vows are as important as wedding vows. (74 votes)

○ I agree (72%)
○ I disagree (16%)
○ Not sure (12%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle

Joel Kauffmann


POWER STRUGGLES, MISTRUST, DIVISIVE ISSUES, ECONOMIC WOES-- SIGH-- SOMETIMES IT GETS TO BE TOO MUCH!
GOOD THING WE HAVE THE CHURCH, HUH?
I WAS TALKING ABOUT THE CHURCH!

IN BRIEF

Doctor's orders: Health coverage for everyone

The American College of Physicians—the largest organization of medical specialists in the country—endorses single-payer health care, as does the California Nurses Association, the largest organization of registered nurses. And so do 55 percent of Americans, according to a CBS News poll conducted last year. In another poll, 64 percent said they would be willing to pay higher taxes for a national health-care insurance program. In Congress, HR 676, the "Medicare for All" bill introduced by Representative John Conyers Jr. of Michigan, currently has 90 cosponsors—more than any other health-care reform proposal—and the endorsement of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.—*Yes! magazine*

Give it a break

During the first five months of 2008, Americans drove 30 billion fewer miles compared with the same period a year earlier, according to statistics from the Federal Highway Administration. The high cost of fuel may be the environment's best friend; this drop in miles driven decreased the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere by 30 billion pounds (*New Yorker*, Aug. 11 and 18).—*The Christian Century*

Mandatory evacuation for three churches

PITTSBURGH—According to Nelson Roth, pastor of Gulfhaven Mennonite Church in Gulfport, Miss., "a total assessment of Gustav's impact is yet to be determined."

Roth and his wife evacuated their home on Sept. 1 but returned the next day. Half of the members of the Gulfhaven church evacuated.

"People are beginning to come back in," Roth said. "Things are OK here, compared to Katrina."

But Roth said feelings of anxiousness for the future remains: "Gustav is revealing exactly how Katrina affected us beyond property damage."

Roth also reported that the three Gulf States Mennonite Conference churches in Louisiana had mandatory evacuation. Those churches include Lighthouse Fellowship Church in Buras; Iglesia Amor Viviente in Metairie and Des Allemands Mennonite Church.

Bob Zehr, conference moderator, returned to his home in Des Allemands on Sept. 3. He has seen little structural damage, but the main problem is electrical outages.

Duane Maust, pastor of Jubliee Mennonite Church in Meridian, Miss., said his congregation hosted members of Iglesia Amor Viviente.

Before the hurricane, "We contacted the coast churches and paired them with an inland church," Maust said. "If they don't have family, they have church family to [care for them]."

Maust said that according to Carlos Enrique Bernhard, pastor of Iglesia Amor Viviente, members of that congregation evacuated to five different states.—*Anna Groff*

BEAVER BASEBA

Photo provided

Bluffton sends students to Northern Ireland

Jacob Short, Bluffton (Ohio) University student, lights a candle during an Aug. 25 prayer service for 16 students who will spend their fall semester in Northern Ireland.—*Bluffton University*

Bertha Harder, education leader, dies at 94

ELKHART, Ind.—Longtime leader in Christian education Bertha Fast Harder died Aug. 23 in Goessel, Kan. She was 94.

Bertha Harder

Harder was an instructor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, beginning in 1958, when Mennonite Biblical Seminary moved from Chicago to the Elkhart campus and began its association with Goshen (Ind.) Biblical Seminary. Harder also served as the first director of Mennonite Voluntary Service.

She was the first woman elected to a major denominational board and continued as a member of the Commission on Education for 18 years, active in planning, writing and leading in the program of Christian education.—*AMBS*

Two Mennonite medical groups may merge

HARRISONBURG, Va.—The joint annual convention of Mennonite Medical Association (MMA) and Mennonite Nurses Association (MNA) traditionally has been a time for fellowship, worship and learning.

This year, held June 19-22 at Snow Mountain Ranch near Fraser, Colo., it also included some historic decision-making.

MMA was founded in 1944 as a professional association for physicians, dentists and medical or dental students who are members of Anabaptist congregations. MNA, founded in 1942, is a parallel organization for nurses and student nurses.

In 2007, MMA members voted unanimously to change their bylaws to open membership to all graduate-level health-care professionals.

Recognizing the significant implications of this decision for MNA in particular, the executive committees of the two organizations met several times over the past year to look at long-range needs for both groups.

Following committee reports at separate business meetings at Snow Mountain Ranch, members of both MNA and MMA asked for a study team to be formed that will, by the next convention at Mt. Pleasant, Pa., in June 2009, develop a recommendation either to continue the current separate structures or form one new association for Anabaptist health-care professionals.

The total membership of both organizations has been notified of this plan and will be able to address comments and concerns to organizational officers and members of the study team.—*Melanie Zuercher*

Melissa Engle

CC summer service worker directs Philadelphia camp

elmali Jaime, a Mennonite Central Committee summer serv-
e worker, directs activities at a peace camp that is run by the
xford Circle Christian Community Development Association,
ministry of Oxford Circle Mennonite Church in Philadelphia.
-MCC

MEDA opens its first office in Europe

WATERLOO, Ont.—Mennonite Economic Development Associates plans to open an office in Germany—its first foray into the European market—with Titus Horsch serving as director of MEDA in Europe.

Horsch will invite business people to support MEDA's mission of creating business solutions to poverty and engaging with large European donor agencies. But his first tasks will be to set up an office, carry out legal registration and begin to build relationships in the European community as part of a two-year market development initiative. The initiative's success could mean the creation of a full member-based MEDA organization in Europe integrated with the North American model.—*MEDA*

Student helps families after immigration raid

GOSHEN, Ind.—On May 12, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement conducted a raid on Agriprocessors kosher meatpacking plant in Postville, Iowa. As a result of the raid, nearly 400 undocumented immigrants were arrested.

That same May, Goshen College senior Analisa Gerig-Sickles was in Mexico and Texas border towns exploring issues of immigration through the Borderlands class.

When she returned home for the summer to West Branch, Iowa—about 2½ hours south of Postville—Gerig-Sickles saw an announcement seeking bilingual volunteers to help at St. Bridget's Catholic Church in Postville with various relief projects. Having spent a semester in Perú studying Spanish, she decided to volunteer.

Though Gerig-Sickles originally planned to volunteer, the church hired her to work part-time. She spent much of her time trying to locate as many of the immigrants in custody as she could. On any given day, since the raid in May, there are between 50 and 100 immigrants in the church.
—*Goshen College*

EMU bids farewell to Oakwood residence hall

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Former residents of Oakwood, a residence hall of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, shared their memories during an open visitation on Sept. 1.

Oakwood has housed some 2,800 men between 1969 and 2008. Around 75 alumni and current students toured the structure, which has been largely stripped of furniture and salvageable material, some of which will be recycled and some of which will be used in constructing the new facility.

A new $6 million, 120-room residence hall will replace Oakwood at the same location, with plans for occupancy in fall of 2009. EMU plans to seek Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification at the silver level for the demolition and construction process.—*EMU*

Hugo Saucedo to serve as new MVS director

Hugo Saucedo

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—Hugo Saucedo is the newly appointed director for Mennonite Voluntary Service, one of Mennonite Mission Network's Christian service programs. Saucedo, based in San Antonio, will work with young adults, host congregations and local coordinators to oversee MVS.
—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Mennonite scholar attends 'A Common Word'

NEW HAVEN, Conn.—David W. Shenk, global consultant for Eastern Mennonite Missions, joined 150 Christian and Muslim scholars and leaders for the Common Word Conference: Loving God and Neighbor in Word and Deed, July 28-31, at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture. Cohosted by Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal of Jordan and Miroslav Volf, a Christian theologian who directs the Yale Center for Faith and Culture, the conference was the first of several planned among Muslim and Christian leaders.—*EMM*

—*compiled by Anna Groff*

IN BRIEF

ADNet appoints student associate

Anabaptist Disabilities Network appointed Devon Lengacher as a student associate for the current academic year. Lengacher is continuing his studies at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va. He will also serve as pastoral intern at The Table, which meets on the campus of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg. He believes his presence in the congregation as a quadriplegic who uses a wheelchair will provide a natural way to raise awareness of the needs of people with disabilities.
—*ADNet*

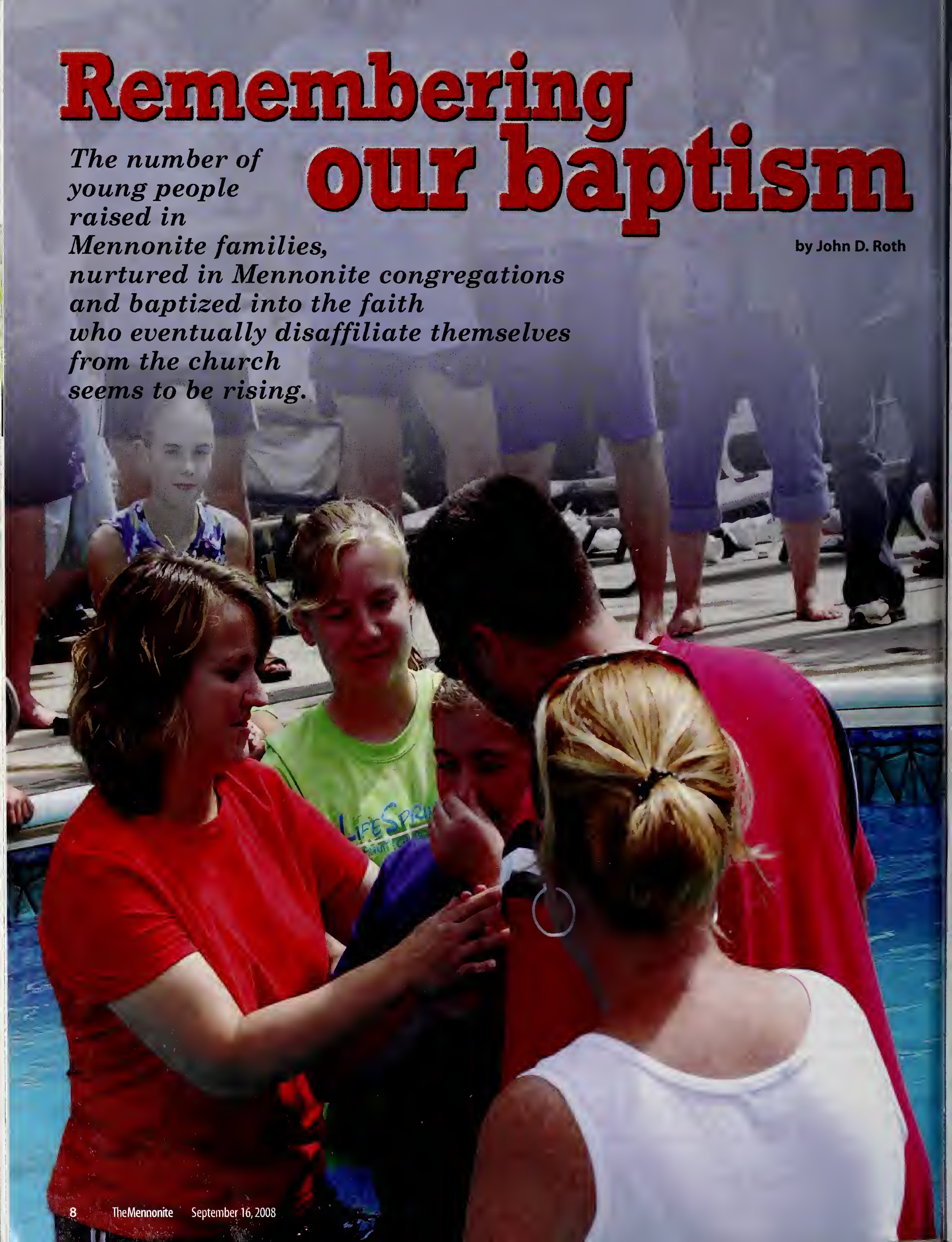
Free trade soccer

Some students were tied together. Others were blindfolded. Yet together they were supposed to play soccer against a team that had no such disadvantages. They had little chance of competing successfully, which was the point of the Free Trade Soccer game and the Sept. 4 lesson for economics students at Bethany Christian High School in Goshen, Ind. The game was part of a presentation on free trade by guest speaker Rebecca Bartel, Mennonite Central Committee's policy analyst for Latin America, who is on a two-week speaking tour to engage churches and constituents about the realities the Colombian church faces, including the harmful effects of NAFTA on Colombia's people.
—*Kevin Miller*

Remembering our baptism

The number of young people raised in Mennonite families, nurtured in Mennonite congregations and baptized into the faith who eventually disaffiliate themselves from the church seems to be rising.

by John D. Roth



One Sunday this past spring our congregation gathered, as we do each year, to celebrate a baptismal service. The event is a highlight of the church year and an important part of our congregational identity. We gather in the fellowship hall for breakfast. Then, as the tables are being cleared, someone leads out in the folk hymn "I Went Down to the River to Pray," which we sing with gusto before piling into cars to caravan to a local pond. As the sun rises, the congregation assembles on blankets and folding chairs for the service. At some point, a member of the church—for youth, it is often their mentor—offers a short introduction and recommendation for each baptismal candidate, followed by a statement of faith and seriousness of intent from the candidates themselves. After the formal baptismal vows, we focus our attention on the dramatic high point of the morning: baptism by immersion and a welcome of the sputtering new member with a white towel and a congregational prayer of blessing. As in years past, the service this spring was joyful and moving—by the benediction more than a few of us were pulling out handkerchiefs.

Yet beneath the evident joy of the occasion are some troubling realities. At our service this spring, nine young people presented themselves for baptism. If the general trends within Mennonite Church USA apply to our congregation, we can assume that 10 or 20 years from now about half of those baptized will not be attending a church. Several will likely be participating in other denominations; but only a few will be actively involved in a Mennonite congregation. Trustworthy statistics on these matters are hard to come by, but by all accounts the number of young people raised in Mennonite families, nurtured in Mennonite congregations and baptized into the faith who eventually disaffiliate themselves from the church seems to be rising. In 1989, 45 percent of our members were under the age of 45; now only 30 percent are. Meanwhile, the average age of membership has risen from 45 to 54. One well-placed observer suggests there may be as many as 2,000 "ex-Mennonite" young adults in the greater Denver area alone, a reality likely replicated to some degree in virtually every major city in the United States.

The decision of young adults to leave or distance themselves from the Mennonite church is part of a much larger pattern in the broader church, and the reasons behind this exodus are complex and multifaceted. Still, without pretending to offer a definitive analysis, I want to focus on one possible component in this troubling trend: our attitudes and practices regarding baptism.

Baptism has always been central to Mennonite identity. The Anabaptists of the 16th century were executed for their insistence that following Christ required a conscious commitment of the believer and that baptism was a symbol of that commitment—"the outward sign of an inward transformation"—rather than a sacrament with miraculous powers residing in the rite itself. Understood within a broader framework of Christian convictions, Mennonites continue to regard believer's baptism as biblically grounded and theologically coherent. Yet today there are at least three areas where our attitudes and practices around baptism merit closer reflection.

We make catechism class mandatory for baptism, but continuing education following one's entrance into formal membership is completely voluntary.

First, our general practice of catechetical instruction prior to baptism is good but woefully insufficient. My wife, an elementary teacher, was required to take a prescribed set of courses and a formal exam prior to her licensure. But the state also assumes that continuing education is crucial for her ongoing success as a teacher. In fact, her teaching license is contingent upon continuing education. Yet this principle that seems so obvious in the professional world appears to have been lost in the church.

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

We make catechism class mandatory for baptism, but continuing education following one's entrance into formal membership is completely voluntary. Sunday school classes and small group book studies are fine, but they generally tend to be unstructured exchanges of opinion about topical themes, with relatively little attention to the confession of faith or the teaching positions of the church. Having once met the requirements for membership at the front end, most of us could go our entire life without ever being held accountable for a refresher course.

We should regard baptized members who are AWOL from congregational life with the same urgency and pastoral concern we would bring to those members contemplating divorce.

Second, our emphasis on the importance of individual choice in baptism captures a crucial aspect of what it means to follow Jesus—God does not coerce belief; accepting God's offer of forgiveness and becoming a disciple of Jesus is a genuine decision. But in our contemporary Western context, our emphasis on the need to say yes to God's gift of grace can easily be confused with the individualism and single-minded pursuit of liberty that defines modern consumerism and liberal democracy. In the Anabaptist understanding, baptism by consent is always a public statement of allegiance—a profession of loyalty to Christ and the church—not an assertion of individual rights. To be sure, we enter the journey at different levels of maturity and with varying understandings of what it means to submit to the discernment of the gathered community. But nothing in our theology regards it as a normal stage in spiritual development for a baptized member to unilaterally leave the church for an undetermined period of time. Yet I sense that many congregations have simply come to accept the fact that young people will go through such a "phase."

"They need space to work things out for themselves," we say. Or, "We don't want to meddle" or, "Pushing the issue would only drive them further from the church." These impulses may be pastoral in their intentions, but the implicit message is that a public commitment about the most important decision you will ever make in your life doesn't really matter all that much. In our desire not to make our young people feel guilty about a commitment that has gone out of focus, we inadvertently communicate that the commitment itself was trivial, and we reinforce the logic of individualism that runs completely counter to our understanding of baptism into a community of faith.

When couples are wavering in their commitments to each other, someone in the church needs to speak up for the marriage. If baptism as a public commitment means anything at all, then we should regard baptized members who are AWOL from congregational life with the same urgency and pastoral concern that we would bring to those members contemplating divorce.

Third, Anabaptists in the 16th century had good reason to reject a view of baptism as a "magical" ritual—controlled by clergy and done to infants who had no memory of the event—that somehow, in and of itself, permanently changed one's status before God. We have regarded baptism as a sign rather than a sacrament. But that same antisacramental impulse has encouraged a view of baptism today as "merely" a sign, as "just" a symbol—as if the event itself really isn't all that important. Yet, as with marriage, our vows at baptism are more than merely a sign. Obviously, a wedding doesn't make a marriage; the real work of marriage is still ahead. But the public pronouncement of wedding vows is a performative act that changes reality.

One's status before God and before the congregation is different after a wedding from what it was prior to the event. Our baptism is not merely a splashing of water. In it we have been marked by the cross and claimed by Christ. We have been "tattooed" by our baptism in a way that changes us forever.

I encourage congregations to do an internal audit of your baptismal assumptions and practices, reflecting especially on these three points of concern.

To what extent have we made continuing education in the central teachings of the church a normal and normative part of church life—something integrated into the spiritual diet of every baptized member throughout our adult lives?

To what extent are we taking seriously our collective spiritual responsibility of "binding and loosing"? The church honors the commitments of members by actively inquiring into the circumstances whenever a member moves to a new community or quits attending church altogether. Such a gesture is not punitive or intrusive but simply a caring response that emerges from the conviction that Christian discipleship is unimaginable apart from the gathered body of Christ.

Finally, to what extent do we see baptism as not just a symbol but a public response to God's invitation to discipleship, marked by the transforming presence of the Holy Spirit, which we need to consciously recall and renew? Over the past decade or so, I have participated in ecumenical conversations with representatives of the Lutheran church. Although we have fundamental differences regarding the baptism of infants, I have been impressed by one aspect of Lutheran baptismal theology. At some point in virtually every worship service I have attended, someone pours water from a pitcher into a basin while offering an encouragement to "remember your baptism." Most Lutheran churches also have a receptacle with water just inside the entrance so that worshipers can dip their finger into the water, not because the water is holy, as I used to think, but as a gesture of consciously remembering ones' baptism. Woven into Lutheran liturgy and practice are frequent and concrete reminders that because our baptism into Christ is for life, it needs to be continually called to our attention. The irony for me as a Mennonite is that, unlike most of my Lutheran friends, I actually can remember my baptism. Yet I hardly ever am reminded to do so.

At the end of our baptism service this year, we were introduced to a new element that points helpfully in the right direction. Following a prayer of blessing, the nine new members spread out among the rest of us, each holding a cup of water. Baptized believers were invited to receive from one of the new members a blessing in the form of a cross traced with a wet finger on our forehead and a spoken admonition to remember our baptism.

We are forgetful people. Remembering our baptism—in the form of ongoing catechism, intentional follow-up with distant members and regular reminders in worship that we have been claimed by Christ—will not in itself turn around the exodus of baptized members from our congregations. But it may help at least some of us recall our commitments and awaken a fresh sense of God's presence in our lives. And it may remind us that participation in Christ, and in the body of Christ, is a lifelong event, in need of continual renewing.

John D. Roth is professor of history at Goshen (Ind.) College and a member of Berkey Avenue Mennonite Church in Goshen.

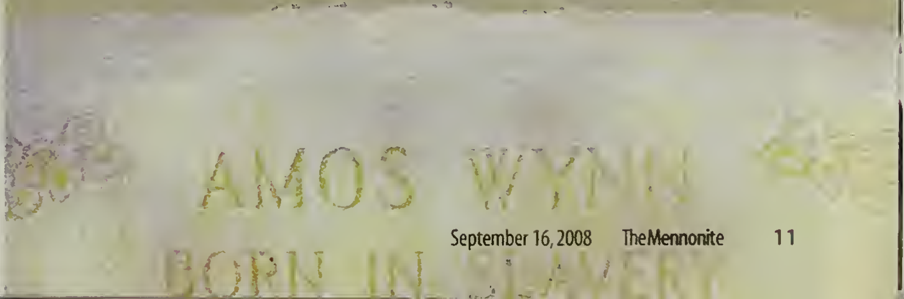
Stockxpert.com

I tell you

by Willie James King

Make a vase of your urn, I tell you.
I don't want to be burned and then
thrown as ashes carried by a wind.
I am a black man, live in Alabama.
I am not indifferent to the Diaspora.
My ancestors were sent in separate
directions, routed without roots, a
care for how they were pried from
kin, children. Place my nude body
in a box, whole so that even while
I am stilled by death, I want to be
so ready! in case there's still a soul
rambunctious amid the rot, mold,
in order that I may be one of the first
to rise, first to have my story told, as
I gaze into my maker's unerring eyes
who'll not be startled, nor surprised.

Willie James King lives in Montgomery, Ala.



Welcome the st

Why we should stop avoiding strangers in our midst and start welcoming them

by Jan Johnson

Richard Thomas | Dreamstime.com

I wanted to talk to a friend after the church service, but I remembered the "three-minute guideline" presented at a leadership meeting. For three minutes after the service, we were asked to talk to folks we didn't know. So I looked for newcomers. I spoke to a man I didn't recognize, but he seemed nervous and put off. Since he hadn't been to church in a long time, I tried to make him feel comfortable, joking about the crowded parking. He seemed more at ease.

At first, I thought the three-minute guideline was superficial. I enjoy deeper friendships—besides, how many folks can we really know anyway? Why make ourselves so uncomfortable? But after abiding by the three-minute guideline, I saw how it eased me out of my shell and gave me eyes for folks I'd otherwise overlook. In fact, it gave me a new understanding of what it means to have the welcoming heart of Christ with people the Scripture calls "strangers" or "aliens."

Without such emphasis, it's easy for us to focus on our inner circle of friends. The more different a person is from us, the more we distance ourselves. These "different" people are often those we forget to extend a welcoming hand to, particularly those "invisible people" who are quieter and less conspicuous. Maybe they differ from others in the congregation in clothing, skin color, language or lifestyle.

But to have the heart of Christ means to be truly present to each person I meet, especially "strangers" God brings across my path. To ignore strangers renders me dead to the possibility that God may use me in that person's life or may speak to my life through this person.

Jesus showed how a welcomer of strangers plays host in a conversation, honoring the other as a guest, even on the guest's home turf. Sitting by a well in the mixed-blood territory of Samaria, Jesus initiated a conversation with an indigenous woman of questionable reputation. Placing her in a power-up position by asking her for help, he took a leap in the dark for this stranger. Would she be courteous to this Jewish man who did not belong in her neighborhood? Would she believe he wanted to drink from a cup she had touched or would he take it and smash it to bits? Jesus' extraordinary behavior toward those ordinarily excluded shows us that in us-vs.-them situations, the thems are strangers.

To have the heart of Christ means to be truly present to each person I meet, especially "strangers" God brings across my path.

A welcoming spirit is what hospitality is about. We offer a sense of home to others, taking God's invitation to "come to him and make our home

anger in your life

with him." We pay attention to them and invite them to unfold themselves.

No doubt Jesus knew how awkward this would be for us, so he gave us this tip—to see him in the eyes of every stranger: "When I was a stranger, you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:31-35, CEV). Imagine Jesus as a refugee and immigrant, fleeing the political persecution of King Herod for the safety of a foreign nation, Egypt. To welcome baby Jesus' family today, we'd need to look not only to our own interests but move outward to care about the interests of other folks.

Why I avoid strangers

Feeling uncomfortable. When two couples who had worked together on a church project for several years needed a break, they were asked to split up and train another couple each. But they refused. They were too comfortable in their clique and so the project died. Doing what makes us comfortable is often our guiding principle of behavior, forcing us to exclude strangers.

Shyness. As a recovering shy person, I battled that three-minute guideline, wondering, What will I say? But I remembered that others, especially newcomers, feel just as awkward and uncomfortable as I do. So I made a list of possible opening comments to use to start conversations. Then I took a deep breath to rescue these nervous strangers.

Territorial attitudes. When our church began chaining our parking lot on weekdays to keep out the cars of parents who were dropping children off at the adjacent school, I grieved. The school's parking lot was miniscule, and I saw many near-accidents. I mentioned this to church leaders, but they told me they'd just repaved the lot and wanted it kept clean. Finally, our leaders' minds were changed when a church across from another nearby school put up this sign:

Public Parking Welcome
except Sunday 6:30-11:30 a.m.
Join us Sunday at 8, 9:30 or 11 a.m.

We're often reluctant to invite the stranger into our world because keeping places neat and clean can become more important than meeting the needs of people, especially strangers.

A church that welcomes strangers

One way to start "looking to the interests of others" is to make it easy for newcomers to navigate situations at your church. Many prayer requests and announcements include the words "Everyone knows." Maps to homes where activities occur aren't drawn up because everyone knows where so-and-so lives. Often I haven't known what and who everyone supposedly knew and have had to ask a lot of questions. I wince to think how many folks are excluded this way.

We're often reluctant to invite the stranger into our world because keeping places neat and clean can become more important than meeting the needs of people, especially strangers.

These experiences have inspired me to do such things as park in the back of the church lot to leave room for visitors and older folks. Newcomers feel strange after years of not attending church. They wonder if they're dressed right. They don't know when to stand in the service. No wonder they might turn around and go home if they can't find a parking place easily.

At its core, welcoming strangers is about dying to self, often in little ways. Such things as parking in the back are no big deal, but they've become concrete ways to train myself to put someone else's needs ahead of mine. We may live in a world where taking the best parking place is the normal thing to do, but as we are nurtured by Christ, we become radically different people—welcoming ones.

Jan Johnson is a speaker and the author of Invitation to the Jesus Life: Experiments in Christlikeness, *from which this article is adapted (www.janjohnson.org).*

Correction: Kathy Weaver Wenger (Aug. 19) attends James Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa.

Holy Spirit

A look at the Holy Spirit Jesus promised in the Gospel of John

by C. Norman Kraus

What word associations do you make with "Holy Spirit"? Speaking in tongues? Sanctification? Pentecostalism? Prophecy? Charismatic? Mystical? Spiritual? Inspiration of Scripture? Based on Jesus' words to the disciples in John 14-16, I suggest still another one—contextualization.

To contextualize means to adapt or modify according to changing circumstances. In John 16:13-14, Jesus tells his followers that his Spirit, which will come to accompany them, "will guide you into all the truth" and "let you know what is going to happen" (CEV). And this truth about what is going to be happening in the changes and vicissitudes of history will be the truth as it was disclosed in Jesus. But to understand these verses we must look at the larger passage, beginning in chapter 14.

John's Gospel is an interpretation of Jesus' life and ministry in light of what had happened in the intervening years.

The Gospel of John was one of the last, if not the last, book of the New Testament to be written. Its readers did not live in Palestine. They lived in a different geographical location and culture about 100 years after Jesus lived and ministered in Palestine. The whole Gospel, and especially chapters 14-16, was written to help followers make a transition from the visible presence of Jesus as a real physical person to the invisible presence of Jesus as a real spiritual presence.

The Gospels, which tell us about Jesus, do not say much about the Holy Spirit. Indeed, Jesus himself did not say much about the Spirit. But according to John's Gospel, Jesus introduced the Spirit as his own continuing presence with his followers at the end of his career just before he was crucified. In 14:18 he tells them he will not leave them like orphans when parents die. He promises, "I will come to you" in the form of the Spirit.

The disciples did not expect the Messiah to die, and they were shocked and terrified at the thought. Jesus was talking about his death, and they thought that meant that everything they had experienced with him would come to an end. He first tries to make it clear that his "going away" does not mean he will absent himself from them. In chapter 14, Jesus tries to calm their fears that God will not be with them after he has gone away. He says the change will actually mean more intimate relationship with the Father because he is going to the Father. It will mean more freedom and confidence to act in his name, not less. But how will he be with them after his death?

John was written for those who had not seen and touched Jesus yet had come to believe on him. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe" (20:29). While Jesus was with them he was their rabbi (teacher). He was their connection to God. They recognized him as the personal representation of God, the Father of all things. After Jesus was no longer physically present, they had to make a transition in their allegiance directly to the Father. And Jesus in the form of his Holy Spirit was important to this transition.

John's Gospel is an interpretation of Jesus' life and ministry in light of what had happened in the intervening years. The disciples often did not understand Jesus when he was among them. But after he was no longer a historical presence with them, they recalled things he said and did. In different times, places and circumstances, things

# of Jesus

Jesus had said came to mind, and they said to themselves, "Aha, now we know what he meant." Jesus attributes this "Aha" moment to his continuing presence with them as the Holy Spirit.

Here we must carefully note how Jesus identifies the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send, with his own person and message. The Spirit is Jesus present in a different mode. It is not just a spirit of high morality and religion. The Holy Spirit is the spirit—breath, inspiration, power—of Jesus. In fact, our word spirit is perhaps not the best word to translate the original, which means breath or wind. But the message and example of Jesus remains central for the new movement. The Spirit, Jesus says, will take my message and example and declare it to you.

The Spirit as the spirit of Jesus inspires and strengthens us to keep the faith and follow the pattern of life Jesus demonstrated.

But he says more. In 16:12-15, he promises that his holy presence will show them how to understand and apply his teaching in the changing times. The phrase at the end of verse 13 is often translated, "He will show you things to come." This is not a promise of prophetic predictions but of prophetic insight into what God is doing in our changing world and the relevance of Jesus to its diverse cultures. As in Isaiah 42:9 and 46:10, God's Spirit declares what God has in mind so that God's people know how to respond in the historical situation. This is the essence of what we call contextualization.

The Spirit speaking in the character and authority of Jesus continues to guide the body of Christ as it moves through the changes of history and across the boundaries of cultures. As much as we honor the Bible, it is a book written in the first instance for subjects of the Roman Empire in the ancient Mediterranean cultures and cannot be applied literally in the variety of cultures around the modern world. It is the Spirit that makes it possible to translate and apply the message of Jesus across cultures without loss of authenticity. The Spirit gives insight into the significance of Jesus for changing culture and guides into all truth. The Spirit as the spirit of Jesus inspires and strengthens us to keep the faith and follow the pattern of life Jesus demonstrated. This is the secret of the Christian mission around the world.

C. Norman Kraus is a member of Park View Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Va.

The tomat

How one barely noticed woman used her tomato harvest to help youth go on a mission trip

by Pamela Gilsenan

This past summer I "plant sat" for Gretchen, my neighbor. She had nine beautiful tomato plants and two promising green pepper plants. That was a lot next to my single patio tomato in a five-gallon bucket.

Gretchen had acquired lots of vacation time, weeks in fact, compared to my zero vacation days. This made her almost apologize when she asked me to plant sit her tomatoes for what would soon amount to half the summer: a week here and a week there.

I told her I didn't mind a bit. Still feeling bad about asking me to do so much work, she told me to take whatever tomatoes ripened while she was gone. I hoped she didn't see me drooling. I love tomatoes. And the green peppers would be great, too. Gretchen's tomatoes reminded me of the real Tomato Lady.

> **A tiny hand-printed sign next to a pint Mason jar said, "Take some tomatoes and leave a few bucks so the youth group can go out on a fall mission trip."**

Years ago, a Mennonite lady at our church earned the title Tomato Lady. We had had a cool spring, but our tomatoes were off to a great start. Everyone in the community, at least the gardening community, had great plants, great canning plans, and there was an abundance of produce. A little old widow woman at church was blessed early with a bumper crop. She tried to share. We found tomatoes on our porches and in the driver's seats of our cars. We had to start locking our vehicles at home and even when we went to church. We avoided her at church and the market because every time we saw her she had a little brown grocery sack of tomatoes. We just wanted her to go away and take her tomatoes with her.

Midsummer, when everything resembling a vegetable was in abundance, a windy rainstorm with pebble-size hail hit town with a vengeance. It took out car windows and dining-room windows. It tore up shingles and made a mess out of our yards. And it took out every plant in our gardens. We had to put aside the grief about our gardens because the glass and structure damage was so severe. It needed immediate attention. Gardening was over (prematurely) for another season.

The next Sunday there was a beautiful little basket of red tomatoes in the back of our church on a table. I didn't think there would be any tomatoes left in our entire county. I looked closer and saw a tiny hand-printed sign next to a pint Mason jar. "Take some tomatoes," it said, "and leave a few bucks so the youth group can go out on a fall mission trip." It was signed "Tomato Lady."

I laughed out loud. Was this some kind of joke? The funds for our youth group mission trip looked as desperate as our yards after the recent storm. No one would have money this fall after paying for the storm's damage. Whatever, I thought as I picked out a half dozen tomatoes. If someone thinks they can send the youth group out on a mission trip with a few tomatoes, more power to them. I ate a couple of tomatoes on the way home from church so I didn't have to share them.

The same thing happened the next Sunday, which was about the middle of August. People had started to notice. You had to get your tomatoes on the way into church because when you came out, they were all gone. Each Sunday after that, the produce basket grew bigger, as did the number of beautiful red orbs. The tiny sign lay on the table, but the Mason jar grew to quart size.

We had a beautiful long fall, and the tomatoes were available every Sunday into October. Sometimes there were wooden fruit boxes under the table with even more extra fresh, washed tomatoes. Some of the families were actually canning these tomatoes now.

I remember seeing the widow woman a few times in church. I guess I figured that the heat was getting to her. She looked pretty tired.

After our first frost there was a selection of green tomatoes that almost overtook the back of our church. People swooped in and bought every last green tomato. The Mason jar was crammed with

o lady

$10 and $20 bills. There was that ever-passing sadness when you realize summer is gone for another year. No one ever asked where the tomatoes came from; we were all sad when they were gone.

Just before the Thanksgiving holiday our pastor got up for announcements one cool Sunday morning to tell us all our junior high youth were going on a late-fall mission trip. It was called Urban Outreach. The youth were going to an inner-city church to work with poor kids for most of the Thanksgiving week. The funds for gas, hotel and eats had been provided for all the junior high youth to go. That was a miracle. The parents and families left behind were then invited to celebrate a potluck Thanksgiving together in the church basement that year.

It wasn't until I was warming the gravy on Thanksgiving Day that I saw the widow woman again. While all the church members had been invited, most of the people who were preparing the Thanksgiving potluck in the church basement were, like me, parents of the junior high youth off on their urban mission adventure. The tiny widow woman was laden with lots of dishes, and several of us had to help her before she fell over.

With kind of a twinkling in her eyes she said she felt we were her family, so she came for Thanksgiving with us. She probably had no family. We asked what she had brought; it was in pie tins covered with foil. "Oh, that," she said, waving in the direction of the serving tables, "that's green tomato pie."

It was as if we all were hit at once by a bolt of lightning. Standing before us was a frail old woman whom no one paid much attention to most of the time. She had made it possible for all our junior high children to go on a mission trip, something we couldn't do ourselves. It seemed like a long time before someone piped up and said what we just now knew: "So you are the Tomato Lady." She just smiled.

It has been some years since that summer, but every year on a table in the back of our church is a big Mason jar, arriving in midsummer, with that now frayed little sign. It stays until frost. Folks still bring their extra produce and leave it for others.

The Tomato Lady has gone to heaven (I know it is a garden) but not before telling us she was once a missionary. I am always awed someone we considered so insignificant made so much difference in the life of our church and the lives of our children.

I'm going to take Gretchen up on her offer and pick every delicious red orb from her garden until she gets back. The church produce table has been a little lean this year. I know Tomato Lady wouldn't want to see a single tomato go to waste. Besides, my grandchildren are banking on the fall mission trip.

Pamela Gilsenan lives in Fort Collins, Colo., and is a member of the Association of Vineyard Churches.

Standing before us was a frail old woman whom no one paid much attention to most of the time.

Stockxpert.com

The next leg of the race

James Schrag is executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board has taken specific leadership steps since February, when it declared that our combined leadership habits do not adequately support our vision and mission. Why did they say this? What actions have they taken?

Leaders accept the baton passed from former leaders. In 1999-2001, the new Executive Board proposed recommendations for merger to delegates, creating Mennonite Church USA. Leaders in 2001 recognized that the work of reorganization was not completed in 2001. A baton was passed then, and accepted now by the current Executive Board, to conduct a review of organizational structures six years later. The current Executive Board has grasped that baton and is running with it on the next leg of the race.

Leaders read the big picture. The board has said that if the vision of healing and hope is to have relevance outside the church, the vision needs to be supported by habits of relationship among church parts that produce a meaningful witness. New organizational habits and structures can increase options to focus churchwide priorities and initiatives. We need a new approach to communication and funding through a more nimble and responsive leadership structure. Sure, we could reduce cost and gain efficiencies, but the board is looking beyond those measures of success. The board is dreaming of a future where our church finds new ways of joining God's work and has a witness that's relevant to a postmodern culture. The board's proposal for one new leadership board was an attempt to move toward these goals.

Leaders prepare us for the future. It is said that folly is to do the same things with the same people in the same way and expect a different result. The Executive Board, in its role to discern what is good for everyone in Mennonite Church USA, asks what will happen to our witness if we continue to be guided by 20th-century assumptions about churchwide affairs. Our fast-changing 21st-century environment requires more adaptable organizational patterns to support our witness.

Leaders listen and act. The board based its actions on consistent listening to constituency over the past eight years. Prior to the June all-boards meeting, I joined the moderator and moderator-elect in seeking advice through 30 telephone calls, listening to more than 200 leaders, including agency boards.

Leaders pace their leadership. At the June all-boards meeting, the Executive Board heeded the request of agency boards to slow down the process of final decision-making to allow more time for everyone to learn new ways of working together. The board said it could return to the proposal for one board, if needed.

Leaders support and depend on other leaders. The Executive Board (or a new board, if created) provides "centrist" leadership—the gathering place for corporate discernment in churchwide affairs. It is important that we have capable centrist leadership affirming and connecting with leaders throughout the church. Without centrist leadership, the diversity of our leadership patterns and initiatives may produce confusion about our identity and mission. It's important for centrist leaders to humbly remind all leaders that the church does not exist for itself but for the world.

Our fast-changing 21st-century environment requires more adaptable organizational patterns to support our witness.

Leaders risk making mistakes. At a March Constituency Leaders Council meeting with conference and constituency group leaders, a conference leader, noting an air of controversy, asked Ed Diller, moderator-elect and CLC chair, "After all you have heard, Ed, would you say, 'Get over it,' or would you say, 'I'm sorry'?" Diller said he would reverse the order of statements, saying, "We're sorry, get over it." He explained that trustworthy leaders always make mistakes. They need to be accountable and apologize for mistakes. He continued, "We also have to get over it because as leaders continue to lead they will make more mistakes."

Leaders know leadership is always earned, never bestowed. The Executive Board, as our principal churchwide leadership body, assuming the role of the delegate body when it is not in session, works tirelessly and listens carefully to the Holy Spirit to guide the experience of every aspect of the vision and mission of Mennonite Church USA. Overarching all our structures is our vision of healing and hope.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **A plea to Mennonite leaders**—Ron Sider
- **Our blessed bodies**—Katie Boyts

Mexican gathering promotes fellowship

Hispanic and Germanic Mexicans representatives from five conferences meet.

Representatives of the six Mexican Mennonite conferences had met before for administrative work and business. The gathering in Cuauhtémoc, Mexico, Aug. 3-8 was special for the fellowship.

For the first time since it formed in 1992, participants from member churches of the Iglesia Anabautista Menonita Unida de México (United Anabaptist Mennonite Church of Mexico), the legal religious association of six Mexican conferences, met to worship and explore their identity together. Five of the six conferences sent representatives to the assembly, which involved Hispanic and Germanic Mexicans, including people from congregations along the U.S. border that relate to both a Mexican conference and a Mennonite Church USA conference.

David Friesen, a Mexican Mennonite chaplain in Winkler, Man., and Dennis Byler, who serves with Mennonite Mission Network in Burgos, Spain, with his wife, Connie, were the main speakers. Byler emphasized that Anabaptists must return to a focus on Jesus' life and teachings as a primary model. Participants discussed how to live the life of Jesus in modern-day Mexico.

A significant portion of the assembly was small group discussion among Mennonites from different backgrounds and ethnicities. In one of the reports following the small group discussions, Leticia Portillo from the Seguidores de Cristo (Followers of Christ) church north of Mexico City said, "New Mennonites see the ethnic German Mennonites with their stability as an example, and they in turn also see things in us, like the freshness of our faith. Upon seeing these values reflected in the other, we can each be more aware of things that seemed obvious and ordinary."

Portillo said the gathering of Mennonites of Spanish and German descent allowed her to learn more about how Anabaptists approach community.

Maria Bergen, a Mexican Mennonite of Germanic background who plants churches among Hispanic neighbors with her husband, Isaak, said learnings go both ways. Hispanic Mexican Mennonites, she said, often have more theological knowledge than many in German-speaking congregations, in part, perhaps, due to their process of choosing to join the church and their level of engagement.

"When they make a commitment," Bergen said, "it is more radical. So many are first-generation Mennonites, while in the German-speaking churches people have generations of history in the church."

Linda Shelly

Luz María Serradell, left, and other worshippers at the assembly of the Iglesia Anabautista Menonita Unida de México

While connections among Mexican Mennonites are important, Juan Jesús Garza of the Conferencia Cristiana Menonita Anabautista (Anabaptist Mennonite Christian Conference) said conferences in northern Mexico also find it beneficial to be in relationship with churches in the United States.

Garza said, "I believe that a big advantage pertaining to both South Central Conference of Mennonite Church USA and the Conferencia Cristiana Menonita Anabautista de la IAMUM is being able to have a more global vision of the role we should fulfill as Anabaptist Mennonites. I can see and feel the suffering of the migrant, and I believe that we have a great task there. I can also see the arrogance and abuse of the other side—of those who have the power. Nevertheless, I see that they also need to know Jesus Christ and be pastored by him. Being a part of both sides of the border, of both conferences, is to be in the middle and to be able to serve."

Being a part of both sides of the border ... is to be in the middle and to be able to serve. —Juan Jesús Garza

Representatives from Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite conference attended the assembly. Participants also toured a local Mennonite museum, a community service funeral home started by Mennonite churches, a congregation that hosts a lunch program and a workshop for people with disabilities run by the Conferencia Menonita de México (Mennonite Conference of Mexico).

The 10-member Conferencia de Iglesias Evangélicas Menonitas del Noroeste de México (Conference of Evangelical Mennonite Churches in Northeast Mexico) in Sinaloa and Sonora states did not send representatives to the assembly this time.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Native Assembly seeks justice, shalom

Keynote speaker says, 'Live in truth and graciousness with non-native people.'

Linda Shelly

Camery Bell and Myrtis Morris of Pearl River Mennonite Church in Philadelphia, Miss., sing in Choctaw at the Native Assembly.

Today is a pivotal moment in Native American history, according to Adrian Jacobs, speaker at the July 28-31 Native Assembly in Clinton, Okla. Jacobs, a Canadian Six Nations pastor, called for action in God's salvation narrative.

Bringing justice and restoration to indigenous people will move all humanity toward the shalom that God intends—a realm where all will be at peace with God, with each other and with the earth, Jacobs said.

Jacobs is involved with the My People International organization. He works half-time for Mennonite Central Committee Ontario, relating to Mennonite churches and working in the Grand River Valley on issues surrounding Six Nations land disputes with the Canadian government. Jacobs encouraged listeners to "live unafraid of their hearts and to also live in truth and graciousness with non-Native people." He called for non-Native peoples and governments to assume an attitude of humility and repentance, as they will never be able to repay all that is owed to Native communities.

Participants examined Philippians 2:1-11 during the four-day event, focusing on unity and service.

Jacobs used a metaphor of "singing the stories of God in our Native tongues"—the stories of all nations and peoples of the earth. During the assembly, several Native groups sang in their languages, including the Pearl River and Nanih Waiya Mennonite congregations from Philadelphia, Miss., who sang in Choctaw (see photo at left).

These two congregations were partially supported in their travel to the Native Assembly by the Stella Devenpeck/Mennonite Mission Network fund. This fund is available to Native congregations through a partnership of Native Mennonite Ministries and Mission Network to support projects that enhance the outreach of congregations or address social and economic need while exhibiting strong local commitment.

Other speakers included Zoughbi Zoughbi, a Palestinian peace activist and director of Wi'am, the Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center in Bethlehem; Anita Keith, a Mohawk educator and author and administrator for the North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies, and Iris de León-Hartshorn, Mennonite Church USA's director of intercultural relations.

The Native Mennonite Ministries leadership council has accepted an invitation from three indigenous Paraguayan Mennonite conferences for North American Native people to attend an indigenous gathering in one of their communities after the Mennonite World Conference assembly in 2009. The invitation also includes the indigenous conferences of Guatemala, Panama and Peru. In preparation, NMM leaders asked Linda Shelly, director for Latin America for Mennonite Mission Network, to share information about indigenous churches in Latin America and expectations for the trip during a workshop. Individuals wishing to attend will be supported by their own funds, Native Mennonite Ministries and the Stella Devenpeck/Mennonite Mission Network Fund.

Native Mennonite Ministries of Mennonite Church USA and Native Ministries of Mennonite Church Canada sponsored the Native Assembly.
—Mennonite Mission Network

• • travel with a purpose • •

Mennonite Your Way

ALASKA & YUKON TOUR
JUNE 15 - JULY 1, 2009

Exclusive MYW Tour to the "Last Frontier"

- Alaska Heritage Center
- Colony Farm
- Glacier Cruise
- Denali National Park
- Wildlife Tour
- Alaska Pipeline
- Cruise Yukon River
- Yukon Goldrush Story
- White Pass & Yukon RR
- Inside Passage Cruise

MYW has reserved a bus for our group; to hold these seats, we must receive your registration promptly.

MYW Tours • Box 425 • Landisville, PA 17538 • 717/653-9288 • 800/296-1991
Email: myw1525@aol.com • web: www.mywtours.com

IMH assembly 'goes into the other side'

Delegates revise Iglesia Menonita Hispana statement on immigration.

Iglesia Menonita Hispana (Hispanic Mennonite Church) held its biennial assembly Aug. 13-15 in Lakewood, Fla. With attendance of approximately 100, there were representatives from six of the 10 regions that compose it, as well as people from the churchwide agencies, several visitors from Ohio, South Carolina and a worship band from the El Buen Pastor (The Good Shepherd) congregation in Lancaster, Pa.

The business sessions included a Iglesia Menonite Hispana board report, and the assembly approved the final draft of the IMH constitution.

Representatives from Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Church USA Executive Board gave reports. Delegates also revised and updated the IMH statement about immigration (see box).

The assembly theme, "Let's Go Into the Other Side," was based on Mark 4:34-40. Speakers for the evening worship sessions included pastors Joe Rosa from New Columbia, Pa., and Juan Gonzalez from Lancaster, Pa. Rosa and Gonzalez brought a challenge for change and to move into the future with the possibility of trying new structures.

Samuel López ended his term as moderator, and moderator-elect pastor Juanita Nuñez from Apopka, Fla., assumed the position of moderator. The delegates voted pastor Juan Montes from Reedley, Calif., as the new moderator-elect. The IMH board is searching for an executive director.

Nuñez is particularly interested in hearing from Hispanic Mennonite youth in order to discern the future and be participants in it. There are hopes to hold a summit at Columbus 2009. Interested youth should contact her at jnunez1022@aol.com.

—adapted from a translation by Rafael Barahona

Iglesia Menonita Hispana immigration statement

[The introduction concludes] Based on our understanding of the Holy Scriptures, we Iglesia Menonita Hispana, declare and commit to:

1. Pray for all governing authorities for God-given wisdom to work on laws to protect and defend immigrants.
2. Demonstrate our love and solidarity with each other to pray for our brothers and sisters who are in this country without legal documentation.
3. Provide spiritual, emotional and physical encouragement to immigrants in our communities when they require it without showing favoritism (Romans 2:11).
4. Write to the President of the United States of America, to members of Congress and other governing authorities in support of fair laws defending the rights of immigrants.
5. Support and defend laws in favor of legalization for those who do not possess legal immigration documents.
6. Actively support programs of our sister organizations that are providing legal services to immigrants lacking proper immigration documentation, such as Mennonite Central Committee in New York, California, Florida and others. Protest against laws that are unfavorable to immigrants or that prohibit us from providing humanitarian assistance.
7. Encourage our churches to search and teach what the Scriptures tell us about the will of God in how we should treat and minister to immigrants.
8. Provide the churches of Iglesia Menonita Hispana the necessary counsel about current immigration laws to help our brothers and sisters not fall into the hands of unscrupulous lawyers and paralegals who have no regard, conscience or human sensibility.
9. Help our pastors and church leaders become instruments of peace and justice in their local churches and communities.
10. Implement an immigration project.—*translated by Joe Rosa*

ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE PRESENTS

Evangelical Anabaptist Symposium 2008

Following Christ: Discovering a Vital Biblical Anabaptism

November 13-15

2008 speakers: John Roth, Jonathan Sauder, Phil Weber, Jeremy Miller

John Roth
Goshen College

To register, visit www.rosedale.edu or call 740-857-1311.

Ron Sider, speaking at RBC's Evangelical Anabaptist Symposium 2006: "I really endorse and embrace the vision of evangelical Anabaptism that you're working on. I hope it will flourish and become the theme of the whole Mennonite church."

Drought, high food prices hit Ethiopians

81,000 people need 3,000 tons of corn, wheat and cooking oil before October.

Mennonite Central Committee is appealing for $1.5 million in financial contributions to provide emergency food assistance to people who are facing hunger in Ethiopia and other countries because of drought and high global food prices. MCC is working with a partner organization, the Meserete Kristos Church Relief and Development Association (MKCRDA), to distribute more than 3,000 metric tons of corn, wheat and cooking oil to about 81,000 people in the Boricha and Awassa Zuria districts of southwestern Ethiopia. The Meserete Kristos Church is a Mennonite World Conference member.

Boricha and Awassa Zuria are densely populated districts where many families tend small farms. Local harvests failed in June and July because of inadequate rains in February and March, according to Mekonnen Dessalgn, MCC's Ethiopia program manager.

Meanwhile, food prices have risen sharply throughout Ethiopia, making it more difficult for families who lost their crops to purchase what they need. Corn is more than three times as expensive in Ethiopia as it was a year ago, Dessalgn says.

Even in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, children are leaving school early because they do not have enough to eat, Dessalgn says.

Earlier this year, some families in Boricha and Awassa Zuria were forced to sell their cattle at low prices to buy staple foods, Dessalgn says.

In June, MCC and MKCRDA began distributing food in Boricha and Awassa Zuria, and local people stopped selling off their cattle, according to Dessalgn. In exchange for the food, more than 9,000 men and women are working on community projects, including digging reservoirs, building terraces to control erosion and planting trees.

MCC and MKCRDA are also distributing bean seeds and sweet potato cuttings to more than 3,600 farm families in Boricha and Awassa Zuria.

MCC received funding for these projects from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. However, because of rising prices, MCC needs an additional $1 million to continue distributing food until the end of October, when families will be able to harvest their crops, according to Bruce Guenther, an MCC relief coordinator.

Because of the global rise in food prices, many countries where MCC works are experiencing food shortages. MCC is planning to provide an additional $500,000 in emergency food aid in locations that will soon be determined, according to Ron Flaming, MCC's director of international programs.

Contributions to Mennonite Central Committee should be designated "Food for All."—*Tim Shenk of MCC*

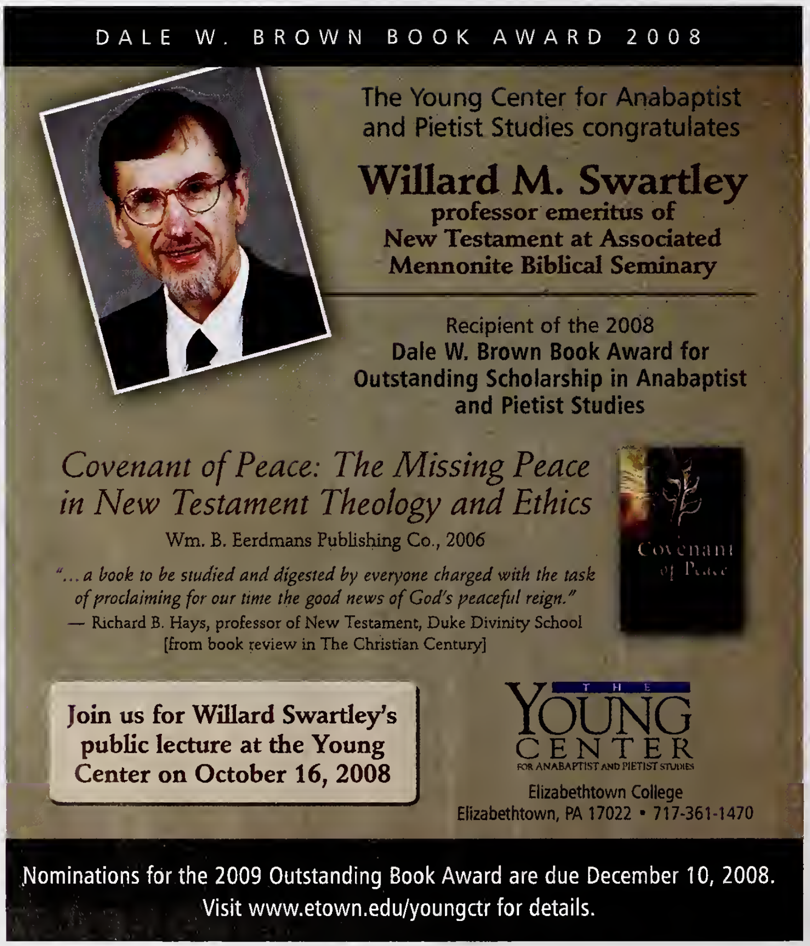
Sales: Insurance and financial services

Combine your professional skills and your Christian faith values

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

MMA, an established, church-related organization, is seeking sales professionals to provide insurance and financial solutions to one of the industry's most loyal markets.

MMA is a highly trusted organization serving individuals and businesses primarily associated with Mennonite and other Anabaptist-related denominations. Excellent income potential and generous benefits. To learn more, visit www.mma-online.org/careers. Fax or e-mail resume to (574) 537-6635 or hr@mma-online.org.



DALE W. BROWN BOOK AWARD 2008

The Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies congratulates

Willard M. Swartley
professor emeritus of
New Testament at Associated
Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Recipient of the 2008
Dale W. Brown Book Award for
Outstanding Scholarship in Anabaptist
and Pietist Studies

Covenant of Peace: The Missing Peace in New Testament Theology and Ethics
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006

"... a book to be studied and digested by everyone charged with the task of proclaiming for our time the good news of God's peaceful reign."
— Richard B. Hays, professor of New Testament, Duke Divinity School
[from book review in The Christian Century]

Join us for Willard Swartley's public lecture at the Young Center on October 16, 2008

THE YOUNG CENTER
FOR ANABAPTIST AND PIETIST STUDIES
Elizabethtown College
Elizabethtown, PA 17022 • 717-361-1470

Nominations for the 2009 Outstanding Book Award are due December 10, 2008.
Visit www.etown.edu/youngctr for details.

Common-law couples wed in Ecuador

Refugee couples fled their homes after guerrillas threatened assassinations.

Two couples—Fernando and Julia Rodriguez and Carla and Elias Garcia*—made a promise to God and each other on June 8. The Colombian refugees married at Iglesia Menonita in Quito, Ecuador, after 15 and 17 years of common-law marriage, respectively.

"[The couples] know that to be committed to Christ should also lead to a commitment to each other as husband and wife," writes César Moya and Patricia Urueña, co-pastors of Quito Mennonite Church.

Moya and Urueña facilitate Quito Mennonite's refugee attention program that provides housing for families of Colombian refugees. Both the Rodriguez and Garcia families benefited from the refugee attention program.

Fernando and Julia Rodriguez, along with their children, moved from Cali, Colombia. In 2003, guerrilla threats forced Fernando to Ecuador. Two years later, Julia and the children joined him in Quito. Because of their African descent and Colombian nationality, the Rodriguez family also experienced discrimination. Quito Mennonite was a welcoming presence amid hardship. Despite the difficult situation, Julia involved herself in the church. When Fernando completed his work as an assistant engineer, the Rodriguezes' funds were soon depleted. They could not pay rent, and the children showed signs of malnutrition.

During a worship service, they shared their economic situation with Quito Mennonite. The church provided the Rodriguez family shelter in the refugee attention program house.

The couple chose to attend discipleship classes and receive believer's baptism. This led them to desire marriage after 15 years of living together.

"[Living together] is something very common in Latin America, especially among the poorer people. ... They realized that they should be an example for their children, providing a home established and blessed by God," writes Moya and Urueña.

Fernando and Julia married in a civil ceremony on April 29 and in a religious ceremony on June 8.

Carla and Elias Garcia were the second couple married in the June 8 ceremony.

The Garcias moved to Ecuador from Cali 1½ years ago. One night in Cali, a group of guerrillas appeared and gave the family 24 hours to leave the country or suffer assassination. Carla and Elias left with their children for Ecuador that night, taking only the clothes on their backs.

In Ecuador, a fellow Colombian refugee invited them to a service at Quito Mennonite. They accepted and continue to attend consistently. Carla and Elias had lived together for 17 years, but chose to become legally married.

The Garcias suffer discrimination because of their refugee status, so they will move to Argentina. However, the Garcias say they will miss Quito Mennonite.—*Mayeken Kehr of Mennonite Mission Network*

In back (left to right) Fernando and Julia Rodriguez*, Elias and Carla Garcia* with their children and friends.

*Names have been changed.

Make a
dream
come true
a program of sponsorship and education

Berenice, 6, student at Children's Care Center, Durban, South Africa

Back to School: Will you sponsor education for students at the Children's Care Center preschool, Durban, South Africa, where refugee children build a solid foundation for life-long learning?

Or sponsor children in another country where MCC's Global Family Program works. To give the gift of education: www.mcc.org/globalfamily or 1-888-563-4676

Kasdorf, Hostetler work with writers

Ten writers gather at Wilderness Wind camp, visit Sigurd Olson's cabin

Kathy Landis

From left: Connie Braun, Ann Hostetler and Arthur Wirch discuss the challenges that writers face.

Ten writers from across the United States and Canada gathered July 17-20 in refurbished log cabins at Wilderness Wind, a Mennonite camp in northern Minnesota.

"We all seemed to arrive with generosity and openness," says Julia Spicher Kasdorf.

Kasdorf, teacher and director of the graduate program in creative writing at Pennsylvania State University, State College, Pa., and Ann Hostetler, professor of literature and creative writing at Goshen (Ind.) College, provided the input as the resource people for the "Listen for the Loons" retreat.

The diversity in the group added to the retreat's interest. Participants included pastors, stay-at-home parents, a magazine editor and an author about to publish her first book.

"The mix, and the talent of the two presenters, promised to be perfect," says Connie Braun from Abbotsford, B.C. "I was challenged by Ann's concept of spiritual memoir. The retreat followed an intense deadline for my upcoming book, and the concluding paragraph was inspired and created at the retreat."

"As a nontraditional Mennonite," says Minke Sundseth of Minneapolis, "the retreat was not only a source of tremendous inspiration and learning about writing, it was an opportunity to see my chosen denomination through a new and creative lens. It was such a supportive yet challenging atmosphere, and it left me full of ideas, words and drawing connections I hadn't seen before."

Retreat sessions included sustaining a writing practice, writing spiritual memoir, individual conferences with Kasdorf and Hostetler, group discussions to reflect on each writer's work and free time to write.

In addition, the group journeyed back in time and place to visit Sigurd Olson's Listening Point, a 30-acre area where Olson, a local wilderness writer, went for retreat.

The writers also visited his Finnish-scribed, dovetail cabin whose ambiance and belongings exude much of the spirit in which Olson left it about 20 years ago.

"As I sit on these rocks and note the antics of the loons," said Joetta Schlabach from Minneapolis, "one is quieted enough to see the direct correlation between wilderness and humanity's spiritual health."

The length of days allowed for lingering conversations as the lake changed colors with the sunsets. Paul Krahn from Altona, Man., co-editor of the magazine *Rhubarb*, says, "The natural and sustainable Wilderness Wind setting offered a welcome removal from the haze of one life into the clean air of another. In addition, Ann and Julia gave me a gift that has carried on into a more confident and steady writing habit."—*Kathy Landis of Wilderness Wind*

Good work...*advanced.*

The Marsh Foundation (Van Wert, OH) contracted with AAI for a communications audit.

ADVANCEMENT Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Consulting In
- Strategic Visioning
- Fundraising
- Capital Campaigns
- Enrollment

Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

Impact of turbulent economy is muted

Half of Mennonite pastors say congregational budgets are holding steady.

In times of economic turbulence, charitable giving has held fairly steady in recent history. According to Giving USA, on average, such giving only fell 1.3 percent nationally during the past five recessions, which reach back to the mid-1970s.

For the Fall issue of *Teleios*, 20 pastors were asked whether they expected to feel a financial pinch in their church budgets to match the pinch their members are feeling at home.

Half the pastors said their congregational budgets are holding steady. A few of them even said their congregations' financial picture has improved in recent times. In one case, a church's finances seem to be improving despite local layoffs in the recreational vehicle industry and challenges for farmers wrestling with greater expenses.

But this optimism is not universal. Four pastors said their congregations have been affected in some way by higher facility costs and rising gas prices. A "long-distance family" that drives 60 miles one way to church made a difficult choice to stop attending weekly worship, explained their pastor. Another pastor, Rachel Epp Miller in San Antonio, Texas, said the cost of renovations and utilities in their building is challenging the church budget.

Three pastors were not sure if the changing economy has affected their finances—at least not yet. Their churches are in a normal summer slump, but it's unclear if it will extend into the fall. Other pastors made varied observations about their church finances: Though some members have been laid off from jobs, the more significant negative impact on the budget has been retirement by older members, said one pastor. Changing economic times have affected the giving of some people, but other members have stepped up to cover the difference, noted another pastor.

Two pastors believe their budgets are holding steady but expect some changes. They replied "not yet" when asked if giving has been affected by economic changes.

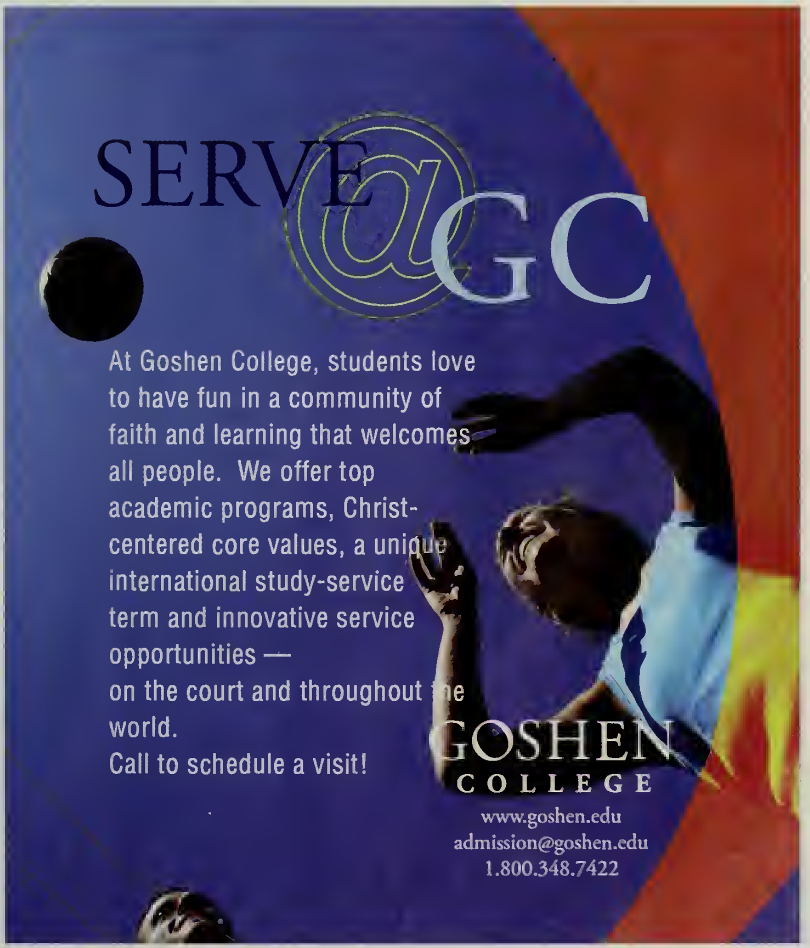
According to Giving USA, the economic climate is not always the main contributing factor to giving rates. Those rates can be more affected by other factors, such as whether donors perceive a need related to a church or nonprofit and the charity's (or church's) current level of fund-raising activity.
—Teleios *from Mennonite Mutual Aid*

Has giving changed recently due to economic turbulence?

Responses from 20 pastors:
- Giving remains steady: 10
- Giving has declined: 4
- Giving has improved: 3
- Unsure about giving trends: 3

We came for the Values, and the Value.

MENNO HAVEN
Relationships. Values. Options.
MENNO VILLAGE • NORTHFIELD • PENN HALL
800.222.6695 www.mennohaven.org
Menno Haven is committed to providing equal housing for all.


SERVE@GC

At Goshen College, students love to have fun in a community of faith and learning that welcomes all people. We offer top academic programs, Christ-centered core values, a unique international study-service term and innovative service opportunities — on the court and throughout the world.
Call to schedule a visit!

GOSHEN COLLEGE
www.goshen.edu
admission@goshen.edu
1.800.348.7422

New garden symbolizes peace for church

Peace Mennonite Church in Kansas puts down roots with new building.

In approaching Peace Mennonite Church in Lawrence, Kan., one sees members tending flower beds in front of their recently purchased building—a former Odd Fellows Lodge nestled into just under an acre of quiet green space.

This growing garden—naturally orderly but not rigidly tidy—symbolizes the congregation's newfound sense of peaceful solidarity. In transitioning from renting space on the University of Kansas campus to owning a building across town in a working-class neighborhood, it seems the 60-member congregation has found a deeply rooted "center."

This building has drawn people together. —Joanna Harader

For years Peace Mennonite, begun as a house fellowship in the 1970s, grappled with whether it should buy property or continue to rent space. This indecision, as well as other theological debates, sometimes paralyzed the congregation.

But this juncture in its 30-year journey has helped the congregation develop a more mature sense of itself as an avenue for God's purposes—as well as a surprising and newfound unity, members say. When they made the decision to purchase the building, they had consensus—all within the matter of four to five weeks.

"The building itself hasn't brought this new growth, but it has allayed some pent-up anxiety over physical plant issues," says Joanna Harader, pastor. "We're not spending half the energy on keeping up this building as we did in worrying about whether we should ever have one.

Now that we've put down some roots, it feels more like a real church. … In many ways, this building has drawn people together."

The opportunity to buy this peaceful—and affordable—green space where they could grow their justice-making dreams was elusive for a long time. Members had looked at various buildings, many priced in the off-limits $200,000 to $400,000 range. But then a couple from the church—Roger Martin and Barbara Yoder—who own a rental house adjacent to the lodge heard the Odd Fellows wanted to sell it in the spring of 2007.

One thing led to another, and Peace Mennonite bought the lodge for the asking price of $120,000.

The congregation financed the lodge purchase in summer 2007 with support from Church Extension Services.—*Laurie Oswald Robinson*

DESTINATION TEL HAI

Peg,

I spent the day volunteering in the children's daycare center here on campus. It was such a great day! One little girl crawled up on my lap and wanted me to read her a book. It reminded me of my grandchildren.

I love the opportunities I have here at Tel Hai. It keeps me feeling young!

Marge

We're here for every phase of your journey!

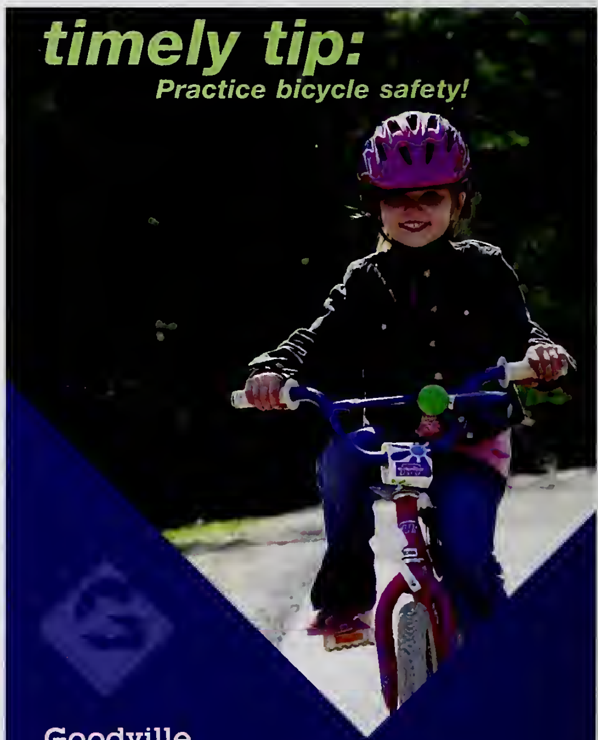
Residential Living, Lakeview Assisted Living, Memory Support Services, Adult Day Services, Meadows Health Care Center, Rehabilitation Services, Child Day Care

1200 Tel Hai Circle | P.O. Box 190
Honey Brook, PA 19344
www.telhai.org | 610-273-9333

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

panpha

Tel Hai
Redefining Retirement™



timely tip:
Practice bicycle safety!

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business. Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

CALENDAR

Come join us in ***celebrating 100 years*** at **West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio**, Oct. 4-5. We welcome anyone who might have attended West Clinton anytime during the past 100 years. For information contact Lori King at 419-445-1285.

WORKERS

Elizalde, Jose, ended work as associate pastor at North Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on July 27.

Hurst, Brenda Martin, lead pastor at Frazer Mennonite Church, Frazer, Pa., transferred credentials from Virginia to Lancaster Conference Aug. 5.

Martin, J. Donald Sr., retired July 1 as lead pastor at Meckville Mennonite Church, Bethel, Pa.

Meyer, Lewis J., resigned June 30 as lead pastor at First Deaf Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Parks, Lynn, was ordained as associate pastor at Oxford Circle Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, Pa., on Aug. 3.

Sauder, Marty, interim pastor at Bender Mennonite Church, Pen Argyl, Pa., transferred credentials from Franconia to Lancaster Conference July 9.

Shantz, Kathy Keener, associate pastor at James Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., transferred credentials from Pacific Southwest to Lancaster Conference on June 2.

Shertzer, Philip L., was ordained as associate pastor at Mountville Mennonite Church, Mountville, Pa., on July 6.

Wenger, Kathy Weaver, coordinator of conference resource advocates for MPN, transferred credentials from Virginia to Lancaster Conference Aug. 5.

Wenger, Mark R., director of pastoral studies at EMU/S, transferred credentials from Virginia to Lancaster Conference Aug. 5.

Zimmerman, George L., was installed as interim pastor at Meckville Mennonite Church, Bethel, Pa., on July 1.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Coleman, Ezra Luke, June 6, to Chip and Martha Kratzer Coleman, Kidron, Ohio.

Johnson, Lydia Faith, Jan. 20, to David "Doc" and Sheena Yoder Johnson, Tiskilwa, Ill.

King, Wendel Eliot, Aug. 21, to Rodney and Holly McNamara King, Harrisonburg, Va.

Moyer, Caleb David, Aug. 19, to Shawn and Cynthia Perez Moyer, Mount Joy, Pa.

Rice, Ashalyn Faith, Aug. 20, to Nick and Valerie Rupp Rice, Pettisville, Ohio.

Slipke, Brooke Rose, July 26, to Alan and Phyllis Nickel Slipke, Topeka, Kan.

Wergelund, Ameia Pearl, Aug. 25, to Eric and Annarie Buxman Wergelund, Portland, Ore.

Yoder, Lewis Eli Thomas, Aug. 18, to Ed and Laura Glick Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.

MARRIAGES

Ahmed/Rhoads: Sarah Ahmed, Columbus, Ohio, and Peter Rhoads, Columbus, Aug. 2, at Bluffton University Lawn, Bluffton, Ohio.

Boehr/Kennell: Micah Boehr, Bluffton, Ohio, and Ariel Kennell, Eureka, Ill., July 26, at the Kennell Farm, Eureka.

Coblentz/Shetler: Tyler Coblentz, Kalona, Iowa, and Rosanna Shetler, Kidron, Ohio, Aug. 9, at the bride's home, Kidron.

Dening/Zehr: Jessica Lynn Dening, Lowville, N.Y., and Elias John Zehr, Lowville, Aug. 9, at Maple Ridge, Lowville.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

INVITING
Mennonite/Anabaptist
Pastors to Projects

Through a generous grant MDS is offering travel cost reimbursement to constituent pastors volunteering* at an MDS project site for a week or more.

For more details see **http://mds.mennonite.net/programs/pastors_projects/** or call Lois at **866-261-1274**
*VOLUNTEERING: swinging a hammer with other short-term crew members!
MENNONITE DISASTER SERVICE

Commercial Insurance Account Manager

AARM, a peace church-affiliated provider of insurance and risk management products and services located in Lancaster, PA, seeks commercial insurance account manager.

Successful candidate will be personable, detail-oriented team player with ability to work independently to service agency book of business and program business. Will handle renewal reviews and some inside sales. 3-5 years commercial insurance experience is required with first line underwriting experience a plus. Property and casualty license and insurance software proficiency is required.

AARM offers competitive salaries, benefits and an energetic, forward looking environment.

Please forward resume and letter of qualification to our Consultants:

North Group Consultants
E-mail: seberly@northgroupconsultants.com
Fax: (717) 299-9300

Driewer/Holzinger: Teddy Driewer, Grand Island, Neb., and Jamie Holzinger, Grand Island, July 26, at Wood River Mennonite Church, Wood River, Neb.

Gingerich/Vanden Bosch: Chase Gingerich, Riverside, Iowa, and Angelica Vanden Bosch, Everett, Washington, Aug. 2, at Everett Christian Reformed Church.

Hand/Miller: Nathan Hand, Grand Ledge, Mich., and Elizabeth Miller, Apple Creek, Ohio, Aug. 2, at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Harrison/Sensenig: Christy Harrison, Wynnewood, Pa., and Peter Sensenig, Wynnewood, Aug. 16, at Bowmansville Mennonite Church, East Earl, Pa.

Hawkins/Shank: Lisa Hawkins, Harrisonburg, Va., and Wendell Shank, Harrisonburg, June 28, at Bergton, Va.

Horst/King: Rebekah Horst, Somerset, Pa., and Derek King, Lancaster, Pa., July 19, at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa.

Kurtz/Miller: Shannon Kurtz, Hartville, Ohio, and Rick Miller, Hartville, Aug. 9, at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Longenecker/Schmidt: Carol Longenecker, Harrisonburg, Va., and Jason Schmidt, Whitewater, Kan., June 14, at Bridgewater Church of the Brethren, Bridgewater, Va.

Miller/Vallejos: Alexandre Miller, Goshen, Ind., and Victoria Vallejos, Goshen, Aug. 22, at the home of an aunt and uncle, Goshen.

Moyer/Myers: Vanessa Moyer, Perkasie, Pa., and Drew Myers, Souderton, Pa., Aug. 23, at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Perez/Schaaf: Janet Perez, Worthington, Ohio, and Michael Schaaf, Worthington, July 25, at the residence of Michael's parents, Bluffton, Ohio.

Wentworth/Yoder: Fay Wentworth, Meyersdale, Pa., and Richard Yoder, Springs, Pa., Aug. 9, at Springs Mennonite Church.

DEATHS

Bert, John S., 65, Mountville, Pa., died July 17 of multiple myeloma. Spouse: Loine F. Engle Bert. Parents: John and Lela Myers Bert. Children: Kendric, Daryl; two grandchildren. Funeral: July 20 at Glossbrenner United Methodist Church, Mt. Joy, Pa.

Frederick, Mary E., 54, Mertztown, Pa., died Aug. 6 of cardiac arrest. Parents: J. Mark and Sarah Jones Frederick. Funeral: Aug. 10 at Boyertown Mennonite Church, Boyertown, Pa.

Friesen, Lois Ruth, 73, Archbold, Ohio, died Aug. 15. Parents: Cornelius and Elma Gearig Friesen. Funeral: Aug. 20 at Fairlawn Haven Chapel, Archbold, Ohio.

Froese, Eddie, 85, Inman, Kan., died Aug. 26. Spouse: Susie Franz Froese. Parents: Jacob P. and Susan Franz Froese. Child: Merle L.; two grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 30 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Hollinger, R. Anna Landis, 97, East Petersburg, Pa., died Aug. 16. Spouse: I. Lester Hollinger (deceased). Parents: Aaron S. and Della Wolgemuth Landis. Children: I. Wilmer, Clair M., James L.; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug.21 at East Petersburg Mennonite Church.

Kaufman, Marie Ida, 90, Glendale, Ariz., died July 11. Parents: Joseph Wilfred and Mattie Jane Kennel Kaufman. Funeral: July 20 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Kennell, Chester W., 88, Eureka, Ill., died Aug. 22 of a blocked bowel. Spouse: Helen Marie Neuhauser Kennell. Parents: John E. and Martha E. Garber Kennell. Children: John, Judy Miller, Nancy Fisher; 10 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Laber, Lori Koch, 68, Middlebury, Ind., died July 31. Spouse: Ed Laber. Parents: Alex and Esther Schleiger Koch. Children: Tami Calhoun, Robin Schwerin, Krys Malin, Mark; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 4 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Laird, Mary Louise Ford, 80, Orrville, Ohio, died Aug. 20. Spouse: John William Laird. Parents: William and Gladys Mowry Ford. Children: Rodney Allen Laird, Jackie Laird Cole; two grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Arnold Funeral Home, Canton, Ohio.

Lehman, Addison E., 94, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 10. Spouse: Mary L. Zehr Lehman. Parents: Christian K. and Mary B. Zehr Lehman. Children: Karl, Robert, Joseph, Chris, Barry, Charles; 23 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 13 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Marks, Lowell R., 91, Goshen, Ind., died July 2. Spouse: Lois F. Weldy Marks (deceased). Parents: William Edward and Edith Hunsberger Marks. Children: Naomi Otto, Ray, Terry; 11 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 5 at North Goshen Mennonite Church.

Miller, Marvin J., 80, Goshen, Ind., died June 9. Spouse: Ruth D. Yoder Miller. Parents: Joseph and Amanda Smucker Miller. Children: Sandra Miller-Givan, Dallas, Nathan, Arnold, Anthony; 10 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: June 14 at Miller-Stewart Funeral Home, Middlebury.

Penner, Peter Adolph, 51, Reedley, Calif., died Aug. 16. Spouse: Jenny Tatum Penner. Parents: Gustav A. and Mary Joyce Penner. Children: Mary Hansen, Sara Penner, Margaret Penner, Laura Penner, Isaac. Funeral: Aug. 21 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Pfile, Anita Marie Marner, 73, Freeport, Iowa, died Aug. 15 of heart failure caused by effects of amyloidosis. Spouse: Elton Pfile. Parents: Walter E. and Alta F. Rhodes Marner. Children: Lisa M. Miller, Diane K. Pfile, Brian E.; six grandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 18 at Freeport Mennonite Church.

Roth, Betty L. Boshart, 79, Washington, Iowa, died Aug. 9. Spouse: Owen Roth. Parents: Claire D. and Lydia Wyse Boshart. Children: Janice Roth, Judy Yoder, Jolene Bearden; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 13 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.

AMBS

Nov. 20 Pastoring in the context of addictions

Examine how pastors can provide appropriate care to those exhibiting addictive behaviors and to others in the congregation affected by these addictions. *Presenter: Brice Balmer*

Hosted by the Church Leadership Center at ***Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary,*** *Elkhart Ind. Visit* ***www.ambs.edu/workshops*** *or call* ***574.296.6269*** *for details and registration.*

Associate pastor for youth ministry, half-time position. Growing congregation, Rocky Mountains! For details contact Bruce Kuhns, 719-596-1718. **Beth-El Mennonite Church**, Colorado Springs, Colo.

English conversation teachers needed. Connexus, a **Korea Anabaptist Center** ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Language and literature vacancy. **Eastern Mennonite University** announces a ***full-time, ongoing faculty position*** in Spanish beginning Fall 2009. Ph.D. in Spanish, or related field, preferred; teaching experience required. Native speaker preferred; near-native fluency required. Provide leadership for a robust Spanish and Spanish education program offered within the context of a campus committed to "educating students to serve and lead in a global context" as well as lead in the further development of a foreign language program. Teaching areas include upper-level Spanish with preference for candidates with expertise in linguistics, pedagogy and literature. Salary and rank determined by education and experience. Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Marie S. Morris, Vice President and Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, http://www.emu.edu. Applicants will be acknowledged by letter. Review begins immediately. Applicants will be asked to respond to questions specific to EMU's mission after the initial inquiry. EMU reserves the right to fill the position at any time or keep the position open. AAEO employer. We seek applicants who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity.

***Ski youth retreat package*, Timberline Four Seasons Resort, W.Va.**, starting at $99 a night plus tax. Includes lodging, meals, lifts, skis, lesson. Info: www.timberlineresort.com; 800-392-0152. West Virginia Wild and Wonderful.

***Residential director*: Peaceful Living**, a small, Mennonite-sponsored not-for-profit agency serving people with intellectual disabilities, located in Harleysville, Pa., seeks an individual with strong leadership and technical skills to lead the development of our residential services. Job responsibilities include recruitment, training and retention of staff, coordinating all referrals and placement activities including intake, training and care of adults in apartments and/or group home settings, serving as a liaison between PL and state officials and meeting all licensing standards. Requirements: proven experience of leading residential programs, Master's degree preferred. Full job description is available at: http://www.peacefulliving.org/docs/Employment.aspx. Submit resumé to jlandis@peacefulliving.org or fax 610-287-2171.

The **Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church of Altona, Manitoba**, is inviting applications to fill the role of ***lead pastor***. Our congregation has approximately 500 members and three pastors. The role includes inspiring the spiritual growth of the congregation, staff and leaders through biblical teaching, mentoring and personal relationships. Please send resumés or inquiries to: Frank Friesen, Pastor Search Committee Chairperson at frankf@mts.net.

Goshen College seeks a ***director of printing and mailing*** to manage all functions of the department. This full-time administrative position requires a creative, self-motivated professional with excellent communication, management and supervisory skills, a minimum of three years' experience in printing, mailing or pre-press/print production field, a college degree or certificate in graphic arts and a proven record of delivering results in a customer service-oriented environment. To apply, please visit the employment page of http://www.goshen.edu/>www.goshen.edu and follow instructions. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with Mennonite Church USA.

For college students

The Mennonite is a great way for your college students to connect with the Mennonite church and nurture their spiritual lives—wherever they attend school. By regularly reading *The Mennonite*, these future leaders of the church will understand where the church has been, where it is going and how they can participate.

For **only $22 each** you can send your student copies of *The Mennonite* from October through April. Just submit your student's address information with the handy form at **www.TheMennonite.org. Deadline is Sept. 22.**

Biomedicine: servant or master?

Gordon Houser

Little, perhaps, consumes our time, energy and money more than our health. And when we seek it, we often turn to what Raymond Downing calls "biomedicine." He also names it as a fallen principality or power that can be a servant but wants to be our master.

In his book *Death and Life in America: Biblical Healing and Biomedicine* (Herald Press, 2008, $15.99), Downing, a medical doctor who has spent all his professional life working in underserved communities, mostly in Africa, challenges what he calls an idolatrous view of biomedicine. He compares biblical healing and biomedicine and shows how in American culture we bend our knee to the latter, not the former.

Downing writes: "We are awed by the power of biomedicine and have delegated to [it] the power to name what is going on. But biomedicine does not really have power over death; its power is only over mechanisms; it is the power of the beast whose fatal wound was healed. This is not a power that frees us; it is a power that enslaves us, that wants to make us all patients."

He is not saying we don't need biomedicine (drugs, diagnoses, surgery). After all, he's a doctor. Like other powers (government, education, transportation, communication and many more), it can be useful, helpful. But, he writes, like other powers, it can demand ultimate allegiance (worship), and that is idolatry. "Whether we use the power of biomedicine or renounce it," he writes, "we must in both cases deny it the power to name what is going on."

Jesus, Downing writes, modeled another kind of healing, one that had great power: "He listened to people's pleas, he spoke to them, he touched them, and he sometimes gave them something from the very essence of himself—his spittle."

Spittle may seem gross to us, but the point is that Jesus gave himself to others, and that is what we, the church, Jesus' body on earth, are called to do as well.

Downing mentions a medical school in Rwanda that teaches its students to "love their patients and marry their disease." Isaiah 53:4 describes the Suffering Servant as bearing our infirmities and carrying our diseases.

This kind of care, Downing says, is mostly absent from biomedicine, which, under the influence of pharmaceutical companies, pushes drugs as a normal solution to most illnesses.

Most of us, I imagine, are not as negative toward biomedicine as Downing. We've all been helped by it, and some of us are alive because of treatment we've received from this "power."

And while biomedicine's bureaucracy is often impersonal, uncaring, even oppressive, many practitioners (doctors and nurses) show empathy and care that is personal and healing beyond the drugs or treatment they offer.

The financial aspect is its own nightmare, particularly for those without adequate insurance.

One of the tasks of healing, but not of biomedicine, Downing says, is to help us learn to suffer. He writes, "Suffering is *how* we live with affliction, not the affliction itself."

The church's task, in part, is to provide a community of support for all who suffer. Downing concurs: "No one needs to carry trouble alone." Yet in our individualistic culture, many do.

Biomedicine can be helpful, Downing writes, but it is not ultimate or necessary. A better model is hospice, which "encapsulates everything that biomedicine has lost: that life is good, death is normal, people are spiritual beings, and they want help in suffering and relief of symptoms."

Unfortunately, hospice is usually called in when biomedicine has failed, usually in the last days or weeks of a person's life. Downing concludes, "All biomedical care should have a hospice attitude."

And so should we as God's people, as Jesus' presence on earth. Just as Jesus gave of himself to bring wholeness to others, so must we give ourselves to one another. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

BOOKS

Electing Not to Vote: Christian Reflections on Reasons for Not Voting, edited by Ted Lewis (Cascade Books, 2008, $17), includes nine essays by nine writers (several of them Mennonite) on why not to vote. They vary in quality, and the arguments at times contradict themselves (e.g., dismissing effectiveness, then using it as a reason for not voting).

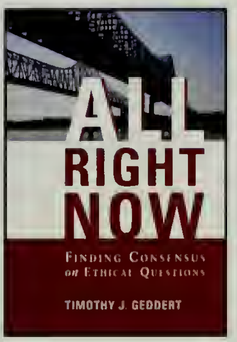
The title of **Seven Steps to End War and Save the Planet** by Steve Ratzlaff (Xlibris, 2008, $19.99) sounds tongue-in-cheek, but Ratzlaff, a Mennonite pastor and longtime peace activist, is serious. He asks us to imagine a world where creatures live in harmony with each other and with nature. He ties together ending war with ending global warming. While not academic or thorough in its details, the book is passionate and thoughtful, a clarion call.

FILMS

The Edge of Heaven (not rated), a 2007 award-winning Turkish/German film, follows the intertwined relationships of six characters that move between the two countries. The raw, heart-wrenching interactions between a Turkish male immigrant and a prostitute and two young women—one German, one Turkish—mean instant love, followed by accidental death. The tragedies' consequences reach farther than imaginable but also connect hurting people and enable them to support each other.—*Anna Groff*

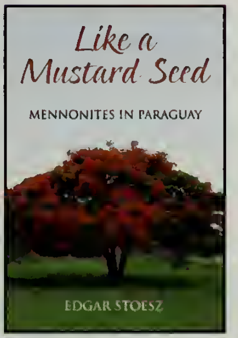
Henry Poole Is Here (PG) is about belief, a welcome topic. However, the film fails to engage, as the characters are one-dimensional and the plot predictable. A neighbor woman sees the face of Christ in a stain on Henry's stucco wall, and his life gets turned upside down. Unfortunately the film doesn't make us care that much.—*gh*

New from Herald Press



All Right Now: Finding Consensus on Ethical Questions
Timothy J. Geddert offers concrete help to Christian communities as they struggle with ethical questions and try to determine appropriate ethical guidelines. His goal is to encourage churches to think biblically when confronted with difficult ethical questions. What would Jesus have done? What does the Bible teach? How can we find biblical guidance?

Geddert's study of a few controversial issues demonstrates how the discerning community can work toward consensus.
Paper, 230 pages, $16.99



Like a Mustard Seed: Mennonites in Paraguay
Edgar Stoesz tells the inspiring story of the Russian, Canadian, and Mexican Mennonites who, beginning in 1927, emigrated to Paraguay and made a new homeland out of the jungle wilderness. In the succeeding decades, Mennonite communities in Paraguay have established schools, clinics, hospitals, churches, and farms. This is a fascinating story that deserves a prominent place in the annuals of Mennonite history. Coming in October.
Paper, 280 pages, $24.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"I work to position my teaching on the line between church and culture so that my students understand the resources of the church and are able to use these resources to engage the world. I hope my students can recognize in me, and in my teaching, something that is both faithful and intelligible and able to serve the various cultures that they inhabit."
– Trevor Bechtel, assistant professor of religion

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

******************************FIRM CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 890 15-DEC-09 S32 P5
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

Baptism should mean something

We believe that the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin. Baptism is also a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk in the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.—from Article 11, *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*

What does baptism mean today? As John D. Roth says in his article (page 8), when members of our church are baptized, the vows they take should be the beginning of a covenant relationship taken as seriously by the church as are marriage vows. But uncertainty about what baptism means leaves the vows anemic; many who are baptized drift away from their vows and the church.

Jesus' baptism is our reference point: His baptism is the only place in the Bible where God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are together in ways recognizable to the human senses. When John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus "like a dove," and God spoke from the clouds, saying, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11).

The highlight of my trip to Jordan some two years ago was visiting the place where Jesus was baptized—called Bethany Beyond Jordan. It is located near where the Jordan River ends at the Dead Sea—the lowest spot of dry land anywhere in the world. As I stood by the river to pray, I had an epiphany: Jesus' baptism was a vertical moment that reached from the lowest spot on earth to the highest elements of heaven.

Uncertainity about what baptism means leaves the vows anemic; many drift away from their vows and the church.

Note: The next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated Oct. 7, 2008.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

When we are baptized—and when our children our baptized—we commemorate this individual, vertical moment within the horizontal faith community: In baptism, the church calls for the person being baptized to allow the power of the Holy Spirit to infuse every word and action—from the lowest point in life to the highest.

But baptism has another historical element for Mennonites, and I fear this element may get in the way. Because Anabaptist leaders during the Reformation established their "rebaptism" as the line across which they would not cross—and many were martyred for it—we add historical freight to baptism.

The commentary for the baptism article in our confession of faith does not mention the role baptisms played in our church's history. But when we talk about being Anabaptist, we use as a reference point a political act from the 1500s in Europe: rebaptism of church members who had been baptized as infants. However, few of us today have been "rebaptized," since we were not baptized as infants. If "Anabaptist" means rebaptized, only those who were baptized as infants in another Christian tradition and then baptized as adult believers are really "Anabaptists." The rest of us are just plain baptists.

This is not an unimportant matter. In formal, interchurch conversations in 2006, the Lutherans challenged us on the matter of infant baptism. While they heard—and accepted—our concerns about baptizing infants, they also confronted us with an important point: Our theology appears to minimize the possibility of God's grace working in the baptism of an infant.

Perhaps it all comes down to nuances. We have baby dedications. Later, when a person—dedicated as an infant—asks to join the faith community, he or she is baptized. Lutherans do something similar. They baptize infants; when that person reaches the age of accountability and asks to join the church, he or she has a "confirmation" ceremony. Each is a reference point for a person's faith journey; the two moments establish a trajectory. But when the trajectory ends—or drifts off course—how does the faith community respond?

There is irony in an Anabaptist tradition that insists baptism is for people making the decision of their free will and then allowing many to forget about those vows. The faith community must regularly remind us that baptism—that vertical moment in our lives—is a vow we make to invite God into each moment of our lives.—*ejt*

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

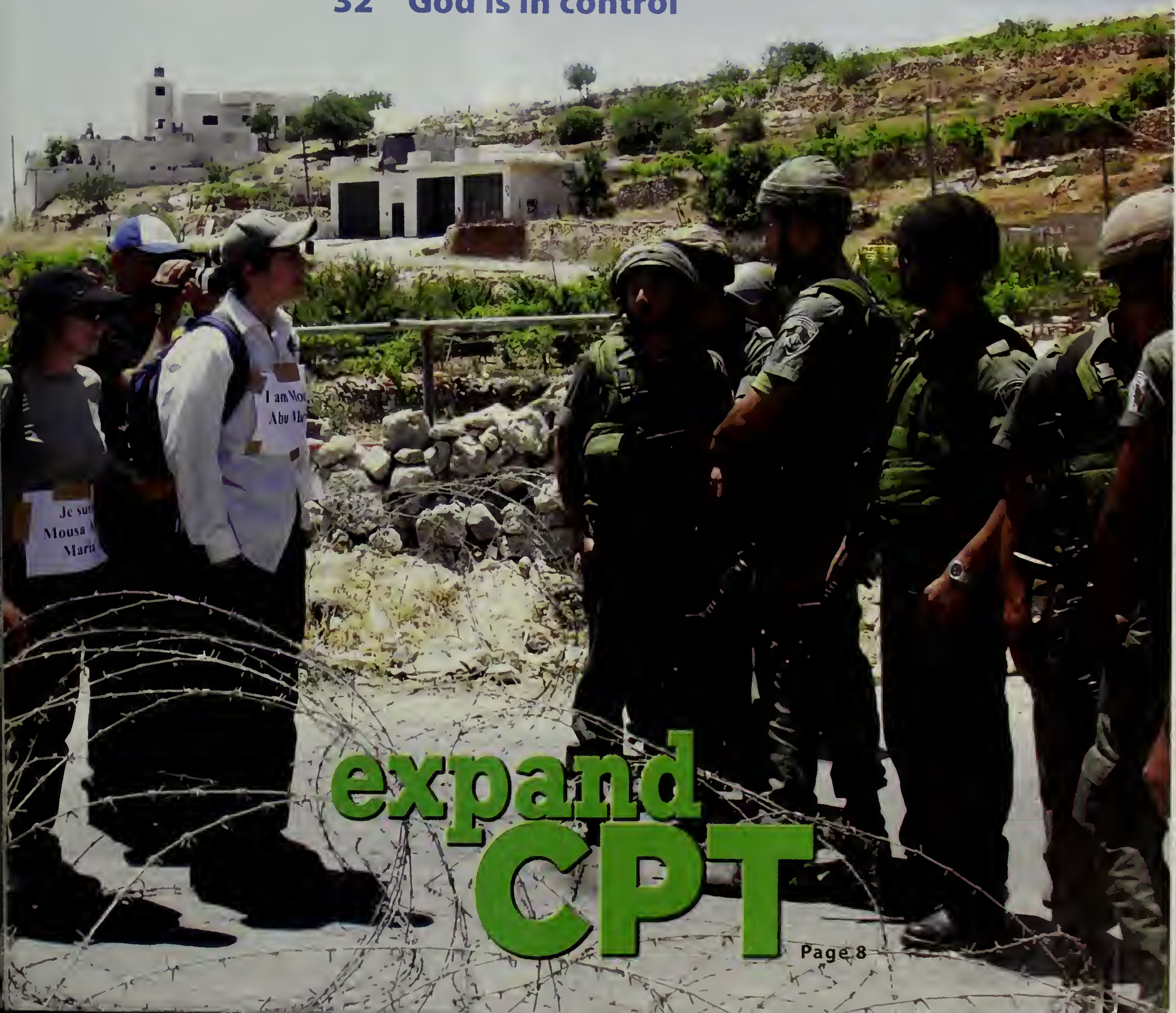
October 7, 2008

12 The front line of our peace witness

16 A Mennonite in the city

18 Why Mennonites play Halo

32 'God is in control'



expand CPT

Page 8

Seeing as God sees

James Schrag is executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

Some of us are tired of all the vision talk in our congregations or the larger church. Others are interested but speak about vision in hushed tones, as though it's a special gift reserved only for leaders and assorted charismatics. The truth is most of us take vision for granted. Vision is simply how we see things. We don't realize the value of vision until we can't see things any more.

For the Christian, vision is "seeing things as God sees them." I remember the moment I realized I needed glasses. I was 16 and watching a basketball game. Fooling around, I asked a friend if I could look through his glasses. To my amazement the crowd on the other side of the court suddenly became distinct and clear. I had no idea until that moment that I had deficient vision. Many of us don't know what we are missing, what we are not seeing. In the church we may be better off doing more fooling around and try on someone else's glasses.

Saul was struck blind on the Damascus road as a dramatic demonstration of his need to see things in a new way. He not only gained a new name out of the trauma, but his mission was also dramatically reversed. We thank God for Saul's recognition of his blindness so he could adopt God's vision through his own eyes. But few of us have dramatic stories of a change of vision like this story.

Years ago, we debated for many months where we should install mail boxes in the church building. Finally a member of our committee, who almost never spoke, suggested a location in the foyer that the rest of us had not been able to perceive. Once he explained it, it became obvious. He had vision the rest of us lacked. Most of us receive new vision in small doses, mostly in small things and often from watching each other—all of which add up to making a big difference in congregations and hence in our churchwide witness.

Most of the time we don't get to see brand new things or dramatic new ministries. Transformation happens when we are able to see old things in new ways—full of new possibilities. Vision is transforming when we adopt a new view of ourselves. Things change for the better when we can see that annoying person sitting down the pew or our neighbor in a new way.

When I was a young preacher more than 30 years ago, our preschool daughter always sat in the back bench with her mother. In the middle of my pastoral prayer I noted some hilarity coming from that back bench. Someone later explained that I had said in my prayer, "Open our eyes that we may see." My 3-year-old daughter had exclaimed in a loud voice, "Mommy, I opened my eyes and now I can see." Didn't Jesus often ask, "Do you have eyes to see?" Jesus was concerned about his followers' vision of the kingdom of God.

How does God see me? Or my neighbor? Or Osama Bin Laden? Or people in that other political party? Or people in that other congregation or another part of Mennonite Church USA? Do we ask what God sees before we decide how we will see, so our vision represents healing and hope to the world around us?

This is how we choose to see things in Mennonite Church USA: God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

Is God giving you or your congregation new sight? Believe me, what we see and don't see helps shape our capacity for what we can see and do together in Mennonite Church USA—shaped by what God is seeing and doing in our world.

TheMennonite

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Vol. 11, No. 19, October 7, 2008

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

OCT 6 08
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

6

7

24

12

8 **Expand CPT**
A plea to Mennonite leaders—*Ronald J. Sider*

12 **The front line of our peace witness**
It's no longer in the churches but in the professional military. —*Michael J. Sharp*

14 **Our blessed bodies**
How bodywork can be a way of nonviolence—*Katie Boyts*

16 **A Mennonite in the city**
Five steps of faithful living in the city—*Anita Hooley*

19 **Executive Board OKs health-care plan**
Board encourages Spanish-language initiative, reviews *The Mennonite.—Gordon Houser*

20 **Gather 'Round connects ages**

21 **Pastors leaving for mostly good reasons**

22 **MCC, MDS respond to hurricanes**

23 **Delegation finds Philippine peace elusive**

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Mennonite Church USA**
Seeing as God sees—*James Schrag*

4 **Readers say**

6 **News digest**

18 **Speaking out**
Why Mennonites play Halo—*Travis Duerksen*

25 **For the record**

30 **Real families**
Mid-journey parenting—*Michael A. King*

32 **Editorial**
'God is in control'—*Gordon Houser*

Cover: © Creative Commons Attribution | Christian Peacemaker Teams

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Forgiveness without repentance

Marlin Birkey in his article, "Forgiveness as a Conundrum," (Aug. 5), helped work at understanding forgiveness. An intergenerational Sunday school class at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind.—studying *Amish Grace* by Kraybill, Nolt and Weaver-Zercher—worked at it, too. The Nickel Mines Amish forgave the Roberts family by choice without payment or repentance on the part of the offender. Jesus, on various occasions did that, too. On the cross he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Did not our Anabaptist sisters and brothers do it as they did? Does this not bring light to Matthew 18:18 and John 20:23? In the Gospels, it seems that Jesus models forgiveness as much if not more than being a sacrifice for it. Thank you for the article.—*Bob Gerber, Leesburg, Ind.*

Can places be holy?

I applaud Marlene Kropf's helpful insights in "It Takes More Than Sunday School" (Aug. 19). However, I'd appreciate clarification of one detail: What does it mean to take a pilgrimage to a holy place? Can places be holy?—*Paul M. Schrock, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Marlene Kropf responds

With regard to holy places: I actually prefer the term "thin places." In the ancient Celtic Christian tradition, a thin place is where the intersection between the spiritual and material world is especially apparent. In such contexts, we more readily sense God's presence—for example, near oceans or on mountains, at birth and death, or at the sites where the saints of God lived and were faithful witnesses of God's love and grace. One of the losses of modernity was that the world was desacralized; in other words, the sense of God's immanence all but vanished. Today many Christians long for a more vivid and daily awareness of God's presence. Pilgrimages to such places renew our vision of a God who is everywhere present and also intimately engaged with our lives. For more on this complex topic, see *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (Ashgate Publishing, 2004). —*Marlene Kropf, denominational minister of worship, Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership*

IN THIS ISSUE

Ron Sider calls for an expansion of Christian Peacemaker Teams and asks historic peace churches such as ours to lead the way (page 8). We also introduce a new page 2 column in this issue: Titled "Mennonite Church USA," it will feature executive director James Schrag in the first issue each month. This change is one result of conversations between board and staff members of *The Mennonite* and Executive Board. We expect more changes in the future as part of our participation in the six-year review mandated by the Delegate Assembly in 2001; associate editor Gordon Houser's report (page 19) includes details of a Sept. 19 meeting of representatives from *The Mennonite* and Executive Board. Finally, please note the new policy established for letters pertaining to the U.S. presidential election (page 5).—*Editor*

People in the pew left out

I just want to echo Lawrence Greaser's letter in the Sept. 16 Readers Say and add the voice of a young adult to the conversation. The business model that is being imposed upon the church is going to do more harm than good because it will only solidify the position of those who are in seats of authority and close the door for new people to enter denominational leadership. A good example of the risks run by using the "business model" is in James Schrag's article in the same issue. Schrag claims that he and the moderator and moderator-elect talked to the constituency over the past eight years. That is only partly true because they talked to church leaders. To be sure they talked to an extensive number of leaders, but "Joe and Jane Yoder" in the pew seem to have been largely left out of the conversation.—*Justin James King, Elkhart, Ind.*

Poisonous brew

What possible benefit to the ministry of the true Mennonite church or the stated mission of *The Mennonite* was served by the article "A Poisonous Brew" (Speaking Out, Sept. 2)? The hateful, judgmental, ignorant rantings of Berry Friesen remind me too much of the now infamous Rev. Jeremiah Wright of Chicago. You gave [Friesen] a "soap box."—*Merle Mullet, Goshen, Ind.*

Resisting military recruiters

None of us are exempt from acculturation. As Ron Hunsicker aptly observed, "We continue to languish in a culture that has blurred the boundaries between church and state" (Readers Say, July 22). The result is that even Mennonite youth are not able to resist the military recruiters' dubious promises. It is good to see that congregations are alerting parents of high school youth to opt out of these high pressure consultations. Reading *The Deserter's Tale* (Grove Press, 2007) by Joshua Key (as told to Lawrence Hill) would assist all of us in getting a clear, unvarnished picture of what happens to a soldier's humanity when he is required to obey the killing orders of his commanders. The consequences of such a decision are awesome. After seven months in Iraq, Joshua discovered that his conscience would no longer allow him to continue a life of crime. He "followed the voice of his conscience and chose desertion rather than complicity" (Cine-Tele-Revue, France).*—Donald D. Kaufman, Newton, Kan.*

Sharing space

We read with interest the statements by Alissa Bender ("Single Family Housing Model Questioned," July 22) that she is seeking "a living space where we're not just sharing space but we're a part of each other's lives." We recently purchased a large farm house with the intention of providing an inexpensive housing facility for service-oriented, committed Christians. We would like to talk with anyone living in or moving to the Lima, Ohio, area that would be interested in this type of shared living experience. Contact us at the following: 1002 Williams St., St. Marys, OH 46885; 419-394-3735; Lydiabbb_3@hotmail.com.*—Brice and Lydia Brenneman*

The greatest threat to peace

I am a principled nonvoter. I especially don't want to vote for anyone who is going to function as the commander-in-chief of our army and navy. However, some Mennonites do vote. Some Mennonites are baffled that so many other Mennonites vote Republican and seem to imply that it is self-evident that peaceful Mennonites should vote Democrat. But the late Mother Teresa, who was a pacifist and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, used to say that legalized abortion is the greatest threat to peace in the world. Apparently many Mennonites consider Mother Teresa to be a legitimate voice for peace. She is pictured prominently on a "Peace Takes Guts" T-shirt I've seen Mennonites wear; I agree that it took guts for Mother Teresa to attack the whole concept of legalized abortion on the occasion of receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. The Republican Party opposes legalized abortion. The Democratic Party supports it. Since both parties show a selective respect for the sanctity of human life, maybe many peaceful Mennonites who vote Republican simply want to vote against the greatest threat to peace in the world instead of any of the lesser threats to peace, as important as they are.*—Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

Country first?

As a Christian, I was horrified by the themes and placards of the Republican Convention. "Country First"? What about God and family? And doesn't our family include everyone, not just our fellow Americans? "Prosperity"? When are we going to realize that prosperity for some comes at a cost for millions of others? Where is Jesus' command to take care of the poor, the sick and the orphan? And the mantra of "Drill, Baby, Drill." This idea that we should take care of our own wants, not needs, regardless of what it does to the earth in the long run is shortsighted and greedy.

Jesus called us to love our neighbors as ourselves and spoke of poverty and taking care of the poor more than any other single theme in the Bible. I hope Christians in this country are paying attention to the Republicans' call to nationalism above all and their appeal to those who strive for wealth and personal comfort rather than those who strive to make the world better for all.
—Rochele Beachy, Shaker Heights, Ohio

Election season policy

Effective with the Oct. 21 issue, we will observe the following policy for letters that pertain to the U.S. presidential election: Readers Say submissions that are in response to other letter-writers will not be published. We also request that letter-writers offer positive comments about the party or candidate of their choice and refrain from making negative statements about the party or candidate that is not their choice.*—Editor*

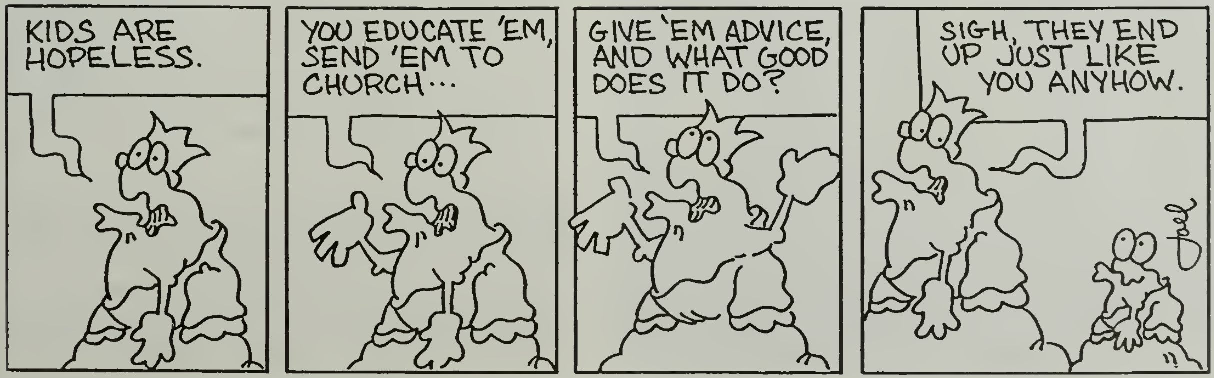
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Mennonite leaders should help expand the work of Christian Peacemaker Teams (67 votes)

- ○ Yes (72%)
- ○ No (21%)
- ○ Not sure (7%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


KIDS ARE HOPELESS.
YOU EDUCATE 'EM, SEND 'EM TO CHURCH...
GIVE 'EM ADVICE, AND WHAT GOOD DOES IT DO?
SIGH, THEY END UP JUST LIKE YOU ANYHOW.
Joel

IN BRIEF

Flores resigns, will work for WDC

Beginning in February 2009, Gilberto Flores, director of Denominational Ministry and Missional Church for Executive Leadership, will leave his post to work with Western District Conference as associate conference minister for Texas. Flores will work alongside WDC conference minister Dorothy Nickel Friesen to provide services to pastors and congregations in the mid-Texas region and give overall leadership and direction to the church-planting programs and nurturing of new congregations, all on behalf of WDC.—*Mennonite Church USA*

Ice cap melting

This summer, warming temperatures melted more of the Arctic ice cap than at any time since measurements were taken. This summer's data indicate that 2007's melt was not a one-year anomaly. In as little as five years, says NASA scientist Jay Zwally, the North Pole in summer will be ice-free. "Climate warming is coming larger and faster than the models are predicting," he says.—*New York Times*

MCC cosponsors dialogue with Ahmadinejad

NEW YORK—About 300 international religious and political figures, including Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, attended a dialogue at a Manhattan hotel Sept. 25 to discuss the role of religion in responding to global challenges and building peace and understanding among societies.

Speakers included President Ahmadinejad, the Rev. Kjell Bondevik, former prime minister of Norway, and the Rev. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, president of the United Nations General Assembly.

The dialogue, which followed a meal, was sponsored by American Friends Service Committee, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Quaker United Nations Office, Religions for Peace and World Council of Churches in consultation with the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations.

Arli Klassen, executive director of MCC, gave welcoming remarks on behalf of the sponsoring organizations. She lit an oil lamp as a symbol of faith and invited participants to reflect on peacemaking from their own faith perspectives.

"As a Christian, I believe we are following Jesus Christ's example and his teaching as we eat together and hold this dialogue despite our many differences," Klassen said.

Klassen noted several areas of high tension in relations between Iran, the United States and other nations. Addressing President Ahmadinejad, Klassen raised concerns about his statements on the Holocaust and Israel, Iran's nuclear program and religious freedom in Iran.

"We ask you to find a way within your own country to allow for religious diversity and to allow people to make their own choices as to which religion they will follow," Klassen said.

The theme of the dialogue was "Has not one God created us? The significance of religious contributions to peace." A series of panelists shared Jewish, Muslim and Christian perspectives on addressing poverty, injustice, environmental degradation and war.

Robert J. Suderman, general secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, was among several Canadians who attended the dialogue. "It was a valuable thing in terms of the objectives, which was to nurture peace by fostering understanding and human relationships," he said.—*MCC*

NAIA
Champions of Character
GOSHEN COLLEGE

Gina Walczak

Youth groups partner for building project in Bolivia

Danika Saucedo (left) of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, and Amanda Hunsberger of Emma Mennonite Church in Topeka, Ind., work together for a Youth Venture project in Bolivia in July.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Community Solidarity Day begins at AMBS

ELKHART, Ind.—More than 200 people walked through Elkhart on Sept. 13 for peace and unity. The event, called Community Solidarity Day, was initiated by an Indianapolis-based group, Unity Being United (UBU). Several Elkhart and Goshen organizations, including Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) and Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes, joined in the effort.

The organization works in communities where hate crimes have been committed. UBU contacted AMBS in early summer to request help in planning a response to a cross-burning at the home of an interracial couple in Elkhart.

AMBS provided the beginning point for the two-mile walk that ended at the Civic Plaza in downtown Elkhart. Walkers progressed through some of the city's lower-income neighborhoods.—*AMBS*

Colombian Mennonite activist slandered

CHICAGO—An Aug. 29 article in *El Tiempo*, Colombia's national newspaper, claims that an email to Hector Mondragon, a Colombian Mennonite activist and economist, was found on the laptop of Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia guerrilla leader Raul Reyes, who was assassinated by the Colombian government in March. Mondragon released a statement to attempt to draw nonexistent links between the social and political movements of which Mondragon is a part and the guerrillas. "Those who know me know very clearly that I am not part of the FARC," he wrote, "because I disagree with their strategy, their political line and their methods."—*Chicagoans for a Peaceful Colombia*

Israeli soldier beats Palestinian at checkpoint

HEBRON—On Aug. 14, an Israeli soldier beat a Palestinian man near the Yatta Road checkpoint in Hebron, sending him to the hospital with a gash in his forehead, eyewitnesses said. The man's broth-

Photo provided

icycles fuel growth of Tanzania Mennonite Church
nzanian evangelist Daniel Marara poses with his new bike urchased with funds from Eastern Mennonite Missions desigated for evangelism.—*EMM*

er, Ayman Karaki, asked the soldier what he was doing, and the soldier pushed him. A third brother, Wisam, approached, and the soldier hit him in the forehead with his gun. When Christian Peacemaker Teams members arrived 45 minutes later, Wisam had just returned from the hospital with stitches to his forehead. Ayman, who recently lost most of his fingers in a work accident, complained of pain in his hands from where the soldier had grabbed him.—*Christian Peacemaker Teams*

Crooked Creek Camp breaks ground for center

WASHINGTON, Iowa—Groundbreaking for Shepherd's Inn, a retreat center, was held Sept. 7 at Crooked Creek Christian Camp in Washington.

Shepherd's Inn will be a small retreat center with a focus on providing space for personal retreats for pastors. Construction will begin this fall and continue as funds are available. The cost of the project is $385,000, including an endowment to maintain the building. Just over half the funds have been raised.—*Crooked Creek Christian Camp*

Church raises $3,000 for Iraqi refugees

FILER, Idaho—During the county fair in Filer, Aug. 27-Sept. 2, Filer Mennonite Church members took turns sitting at the church building to accept donations from people wanting to park their vehicles in the church's parking lot. This year the county fair coincided with an urgent call from Mennonite Central Committee for relief kits for Iraqi refugees. Members of Filer Mennonite decided to use the church parking lot as an opportunity to raise community awareness to the plight of Iraqi refugees while also collecting relief kit items.

Fairgoers donated $3,110 and 12 complete relief kits in exchange for parking spots in the church parking lot, which is nearly five times the dollar amount donated in a typical year.—*Filer Mennonite Church*

Historical Committee announces essay winners

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mutual aid emerged as a theme of the winning entries in this year's John Horsch Mennonite Historical Essay Contest.

Sarah Bergen from Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., took top honors in the graduate school/seminary category with her paper on "Re-Interpreting Mennonite Identity in Mid-20th Century America: A Conversation about Mutual Aid." She examined dynamics behind the development of mutual aid, including the organization of Mennonite Mutual Aid.

Jonny Gerig Meyer from Goshen (Ind.) College won first place in the undergraduate category with "Sending Mixed Messages to Congress: Mennonite Involvement in Proposed National Health Care Reform 1992-1994." He detailed conflicting messages from Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Central Committee's Washington Office as each lobbied Congress during President Clinton's failed attempt to revamp the U.S. healthcare system.—*Mennonite Church USA*

Former Indiana pastor arrested in Ohio

GOSHEN, Ind.—The former pastor of a congregation that left Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference in 1995 was arrested in Lucas County, Ohio, on Sept. 10. David E. Troyer, 65, reportedly took approximately $40,000 from the Maple Grove Church in Topeka, Ind., before he disappeared. According to the Lucas County sheriff's department, Troyer was charged with five counts of forgery and was being held in the Lucas County jail on felony charges.

According to *The Goshen News*, Troyer was asked to step down as pastor by officials in the congregation after they learned he had allegedly misappropriated about $40,000 of church funds in November 2007. While tracking the money, officials reportedly learned that Troyer was using aliases and fraudulent business fronts to conduct transactions. A spokesperson for Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference said the congregation, formerly called Maple Grove Mennonite Church, left the conference in 1995 around the issue of homosexuality.—*Everett Thomas*

—compiled by Anna Groff

IN BRIEF

Kraybill, AMBS president, resigns

Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., since 1997, has announced his intent to step down as president of the seminary in summer 2009. Kraybill explains that he hopes to move into another assignment, although he has no specific plans at this time. "If God grants me health, I hope to take on a new assignment in the church to which I can dedicate a decade of my life," he says.—*AMBS*

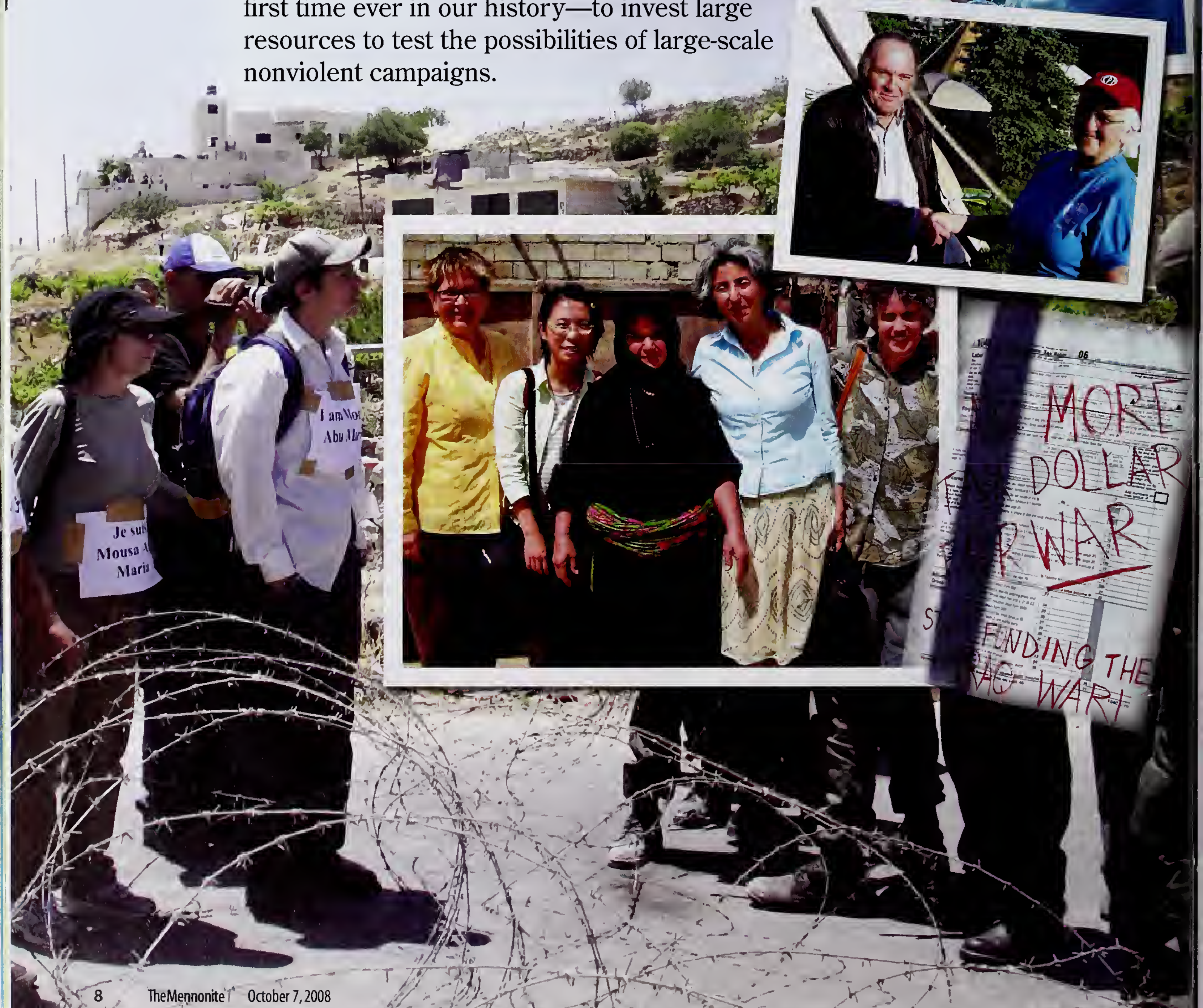
Burkholder joins MEA staff

Timothy J. Burkholder of Goshen, Ind., joined Mennonite Education Agency as associate director with a focus on church relations and development. With over 25 years experience working in this area in a variety of churchwide ministries, Burkholder began working half-time at the Goshen office on Oct. 1, increasing to full-time on Jan. 1, 2009. He is interim executive conference minister at Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference and assists the conference's transition team.
—Mennonite Church USA

Expand CPT

by Ronald J. Sider

It is time for top Mennonite leaders to take a dramatic new step and issue a daring new call for a vast expansion of Christian Peacemaker Teams. With only modest resources and less institutional support, CPT's activities—and a host of other successful nonviolent campaigns in the last few decades—have demonstrated that nonviolence frequently prevents bloodshed and promotes justice. It is time for the Christian church—for the first time ever in our history—to invest large resources to test the possibilities of large-scale nonviolent campaigns.



A plea to Mennonite leaders

I believe the top leaders of our Mennonite bodies (along with the leaders of other historic peace churches) should lead the way. The first step is to expand dramatically the work of CPT. And the second step is to issue an invitation to the leadership of all Christian denominations to join in a massive exploration of the possibilities of promoting peace and justice through nonviolent direct action.

It is important to recall the context for this proposal.

The 20th century was the bloodiest in human history. In *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century* (Yale, 2000), Jonathan Glover estimates that 86 million people died in wars fought from 1900 to 1989. That means 2,500 people every day, 100 people every hour, for 89 years. In addition to those killed in war, genocide and mass murder by governments killed approximately 120 million people just in the 20th century—perhaps more than 80 million alone in the two Communist countries of China and the Soviet Union, according to R. J. Rummel's *Statistics of Democide* (Rutgers, 1997).

It is ironic, then, that the violent 20th century also produced numerous, stunningly successful examples of nonviolent victories over injustice and oppression.

The best-known examples are probably Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. King's nonviolent marchers changed American history. Gandhi's nonviolent campaign defeated the British Empire and won India's independence. In contrast to Algeria's violent independence campaign, in which one of every 10 Algerians died, only one in 400,000 Indians died in India's nonviolent struggle.

One of the most amazing components of Gandhi's campaign was a huge nonviolent "army" (over 50,000 eventually) of Muslim Pathans in the northwestern section of India. These are the same people we now know as the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Pakistan border. Even when the British humiliated them and slaughtered hundreds of them, they remained faithful to Gandhi's nonviolent vision.

In Poland, Solidarity's nonviolent campaign successfully defied and helped defeat the Soviet empire. In the Philippines, a million peaceful demonstrators overthrew the brutal dictatorship of President Marcos. The list of successful 20th-century nonviolent campaigns is long.

Considering these successes, one wonders what might happen if the Christian world became really serious about exploring the full possibilities of applying nonviolent methods of seeking peace in unjust, violent situations around the world. All Christians claim to believe Jesus when he says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9). But we have not made much use of one of the demonstrably successful ways to make peace.

For about 20 years now, a tiny handful of daring folk in a few Christian Peacemaker Teams (made famous by the kidnapping of four team members in Iraq in late 2005) have been working to apply the nonviolent techniques of Gandhi and King in conflict situations around the world. At Hebron in the West Bank, a few Jewish settlers live in the midst of the overwhelmingly Palestinian city of Hebron. Taunts, anger, violence and death are frequent on all sides. For 10 years, CPTers have lived in Hebron, seeking nonviolently to befriend both sides, accompanying those threatened by violence, sitting in houses threatened with illegal demolition and promoting understanding and peace. CPT teams have also intervened in Canada to defend the rights of Native Canadians. They are also seeking to protect and support the just demands of oppressed peasants in Latin America.

One need not agree with all of CPT's political and theological ideas to conclude that now is the time first for the Mennonite leadership and then for the entire Christian community to ask, Could we vastly expand CPT's use of nonviolent approaches to peacemaking?

It is ironic that the violent 20th century also produced numerous, stunningly successful examples of nonviolent victories over injustice and oppression.

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

"Just war" Christians (the vast majority of all Christians since the fourth century) have always claimed that war must be a last resort; before anyone is to go to war, we must have tried all reasonable nonviolent alternatives. But how can contemporary just war Christians claim they have tried all reasonable nonviolent alternatives in the face of two hard facts: (1) even without much preparation, nonviolent approaches have worked again and again; (2) we have never trained thousands of CPT-like teams that could explore the possibilities of nonviolence in a serious, sustained way. In order to engage in an honest, large-scale test of nonviolence, just war Christians do not have to believe that nonviolence will always prevent war. All they must do is implement their own rule that war must be a last resort.

In order to engage in an honest, large-scale test of nonviolence, just war Christians do not have to believe that nonviolence will always prevent war.

Pacifists have long claimed they have an alternative to war. But that claim remains empty unless we are willing to risk death, as soldiers do, to stop injustice and bring peace.

The theological commitments of both just war and pacifist Christians demand that they invest serious time and resources in sustained nonviolent peacemaking.

Think of what might have happened before Bosnia or Kosovo exploded in carnage if the Archbishop of Canterbury, top Catholic Cardinals (or even the Pope) and leading Orthodox leaders had invited Muslim leaders to join them in leading a few thousand praying, peaceful Christian and Muslim followers into those dangerous places to demand peace. A prominent Palestinian Christian has said there ought to be 1,000 CPT teams spread all over the West Bank.

I know from personal experience that this kind of nonviolent intervention feels—and often is—dangerous. In the mid-1980s, the United States was secretly funding thousands of guerrillas (called the Contras) who were killing hundreds of Nicaraguan civilians in their attempt to overthrow the Sandinista government. I opposed the Marxist, repressive tendencies of the Sandinista government but also rejected U.S. funding of the Contras. So in early 1985, I joined a team from Witness for Peace that visited a Nicaraguan town under attack by the Contras. As we wound our way down the side of the mountain toward the town, we knew a thousand guerrillas in the surrounding hills had their binoculars (and perhaps their guns) on us. I was scared but believed God had called me to that moment. We arrived safely, and the townsfolk told us they slept peacefully that night, believing the Contras would not attack while a team of praying American Christians were there.

If top global Christian leaders (hopefully joined by Jews, Muslims and others) led 1,000 trained, praying, nonviolent peacemakers into the West Bank, the eyes of the world would be on them. Hundreds of millions would be praying for peace and justice for both Israelis and Palestinians. Massive media coverage would pressure both sides to negotiate. The same would happen if Archbishop Tutu led a few thousand praying African Christians (joined by people from other continents) into Zimbabwe to demand that President Mugabe permit fair elections.

So what should we do? Obviously we need to expand CPT a hundredfold, then a thousandfold. How can we do that?

Let's be candid. The top leadership of the Mennonite church seriously explored the idea of CPT-type activity after the Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg in 1984. They wrestled with the question, Is this kind of nonviolent but activist peacemaking faithful to our Anabaptist understanding? The leaders arrived at a clear answer: yes. But then the leadership of the Mennonite church stepped back and left the implementation of the concept to a small group of peace activists who were largely at the margins of the Mennonite world.

But a few daring folk did it. They launched one, then another small team. And it worked. They demonstrated that even small groups of courageous peacemakers can insert themselves into violent situations and promote peace and justice. My hat is off with appreciation to these few, courageous folk. That is not to say that I agree with all their political and theological judgments. But they dared to do it and prove that it works.

Now is the time for a massive expansion of CPT. The leadership of our major Mennonite institutions should join to call the Mennonite community to expand CPT from a handful of teams to hundreds of teams in the next few years. That would mean calling hundreds of people in our congregations to volunteer for CPT and urging our Mennonite institutions and congregations to fund this expansion. It would mean prominent Mennonite leaders joining CPT's board.

It would also mean changes in CPT. It would need to welcome a significant number of prominent church leaders into the heart of their decision-making process. They would need to be willing to change CPT's internal culture and practices to make it more friendly to the center of the Mennonite church. (For example, CPT's official policy is that it takes no stand on homosexual practice. But in practice, some of its actions demonstrate a clear pro-gay stand. That would have to change.)

The leadership of our major Mennonite institutions should join to call the Mennonite community to expand CPT from a handful of teams to hundreds of teams in the next few years.

I have no doubt that the global Mennonite community has the willing volunteers and the economic resources to train and deploy several hundred CPT teams by the year 2010—if the Mennonite leadership will issue the call and lead the way. But that is only the first step.

After a couple years of dramatic expansion of CPT by Mennonites and the other historic peace churches already engaged in CPT, the historic peace church leaders should issue a call to the leadership of the entire Christian world: "For the first time in two millennia of Christian history, we invite you to join us in exploring the possibilities of using large numbers of CPT-type teams to reduce bloodshed and promote justice." For this call, we need not demand that just-war Christians become pacifists. We need only ask that they implement their own theory that war must be a last resort. Maybe we could resolve many dangerous conflicts through activist nonviolence if the Christian community (working with people of other faiths as well) had 10,000 Gandhi-type peacemakers ready to intervene in violent, unjust situations.

Spring 2004 Newly trained Christian Peacemaker group

© Creative Commons Attribution | Christian Peacemaker Teams

The global Mennonite community has the willing volunteers and the economic resources to train and deploy several hundred CPT teams by the year 2010.

If Christians—both just-war Christians and pacifists—mean what they have been saying for centuries about war and peace, then we have no choice. Nonviolence has worked. It's time to invest tens of millions of dollars in serious training and deployment. We cannot know ahead of time what will happen. But we already know that unless we do this, our Christian rhetoric about war—both pacifist and just war—will be both hypocritical and dishonest.

It's time to live what we preach.

Ronald J. Sider is professor of theology and culture at Palmer Seminary, Wynnewood, Pa.

The front line of

It's no longer in the churches but in th

by Michael J. Sharp

© Anita Pepper | Dreamstime.com

In the age of the professional military, it's hard to know how to offer a relevant peace witness. We're no longer called before draft boards. We don't have to do anything to avoid military service. We just have to avoid signing up. In the meantime, we continue to fund wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with our tax dollars. Does an all-volunteer military make our witness obsolete? Definitely not. The truth is, our peace stance is still relevant and is a gift we can offer professional soldiers, if we don't keep it to ourselves.

Robert Weiss, a U.S. soldier stationed in Germany, is one example of someone inspired by what he learned about Mennonites. When he started to question his participation in the military, he turned to the writings of Mennonite theologians and historians such as John Howard Yoder and John D. Roth for a new Christian outlook on the issues of war and peace. What started as a Google search for "Christians and nonviolence" led to a reading list that could have come straight out of a theology or peace and justice course at a Mennonite college.

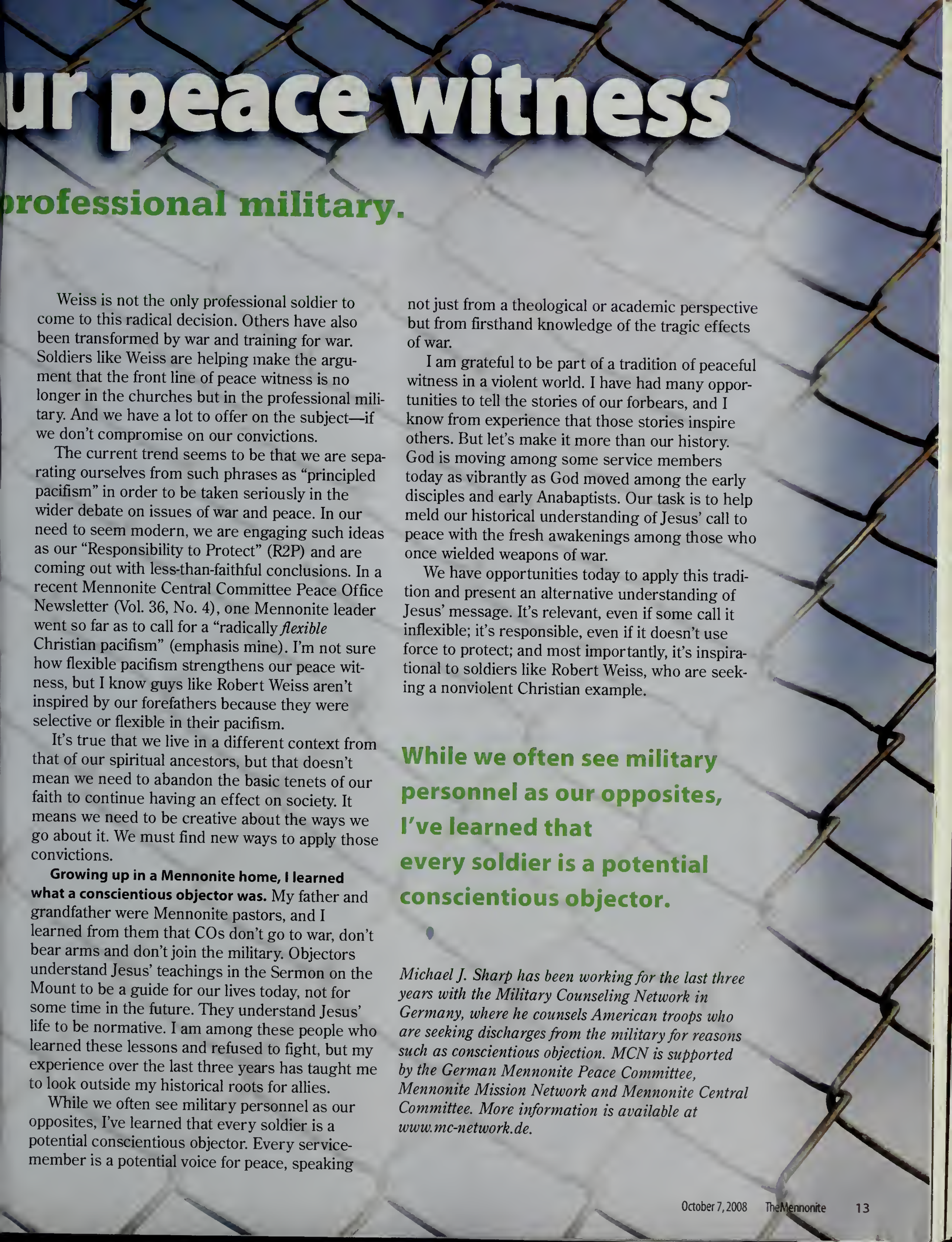
Unfortunately for the Army, Weiss didn't stop with reading. In June 2007, he applied for discharge from the military on the grounds of conscientious objection. As he wrote to his commanding officer, "It is my deeply held belief that participation in warfare is immoral. This is built upon my feeling that war—and furthermore killing—is against the will of God." He had come a long way from loving his job as a combat soldier in his Stryker Brigade.

In August 2007, with his claim for conscientious objection still pending, Weiss was deployed to Iraq with his unit. While in Iraq, he refused to do any combat-related duties but was told that if his claim were denied, he would be expected to go back to his normal job, doing patrols and "soldiering on," as they say.

Weiss made it clear, though, that soldiering on was not an option. In November 2007, he wrote: "As it stands, I am left with two possible options. The first is that my application is accepted and I will have my discharge. The second is that my application is rejected, they order me back to combat duties, I refuse orders [and] I am incarcerated." He had made up his mind. He would go to jail before returning to combat operations.

One month after writing those words, he was informed that the Department of the Army had denied his request for discharge for conscientious objection. With no remaining legal option to avoid returning to combat, Weiss went AWOL (absent without leave). In February, he turned himself back in to military control and is now awaiting court martial in Vilseck, Germany.

He had made up his mind. He would go to jail before returning to combat operations.



ur peace witness

rofessional military.

Weiss is not the only professional soldier to come to this radical decision. Others have also been transformed by war and training for war. Soldiers like Weiss are helping make the argument that the front line of peace witness is no longer in the churches but in the professional military. And we have a lot to offer on the subject—if we don't compromise on our convictions.

The current trend seems to be that we are separating ourselves from such phrases as "principled pacifism" in order to be taken seriously in the wider debate on issues of war and peace. In our need to seem modern, we are engaging such ideas as our "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P) and are coming out with less-than-faithful conclusions. In a recent Mennonite Central Committee Peace Office Newsletter (Vol. 36, No. 4), one Mennonite leader went so far as to call for a "radically *flexible* Christian pacifism" (emphasis mine). I'm not sure how flexible pacifism strengthens our peace witness, but I know guys like Robert Weiss aren't inspired by our forefathers because they were selective or flexible in their pacifism.

It's true that we live in a different context from that of our spiritual ancestors, but that doesn't mean we need to abandon the basic tenets of our faith to continue having an effect on society. It means we need to be creative about the ways we go about it. We must find new ways to apply those convictions.

Growing up in a Mennonite home, I learned what a conscientious objector was. My father and grandfather were Mennonite pastors, and I learned from them that COs don't go to war, don't bear arms and don't join the military. Objectors understand Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount to be a guide for our lives today, not for some time in the future. They understand Jesus' life to be normative. I am among these people who learned these lessons and refused to fight, but my experience over the last three years has taught me to look outside my historical roots for allies.

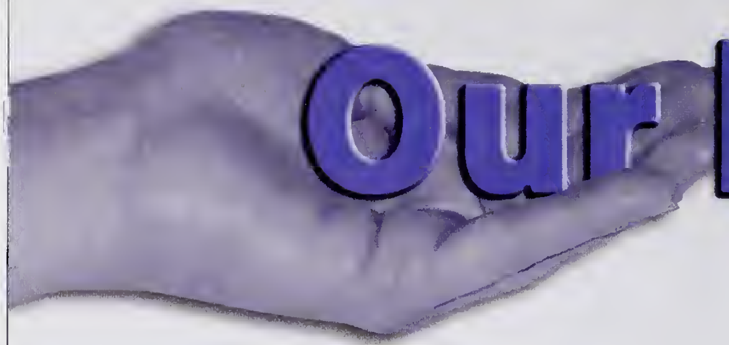
While we often see military personnel as our opposites, I've learned that every soldier is a potential conscientious objector. Every servicemember is a potential voice for peace, speaking not just from a theological or academic perspective but from firsthand knowledge of the tragic effects of war.

I am grateful to be part of a tradition of peaceful witness in a violent world. I have had many opportunities to tell the stories of our forbears, and I know from experience that those stories inspire others. But let's make it more than our history. God is moving among some service members today as vibrantly as God moved among the early disciples and early Anabaptists. Our task is to help meld our historical understanding of Jesus' call to peace with the fresh awakenings among those who once wielded weapons of war.

We have opportunities today to apply this tradition and present an alternative understanding of Jesus' message. It's relevant, even if some call it inflexible; it's responsible, even if it doesn't use force to protect; and most importantly, it's inspirational to soldiers like Robert Weiss, who are seeking a nonviolent Christian example.

While we often see military personnel as our opposites, I've learned that every soldier is a potential conscientious objector.

Michael J. Sharp has been working for the last three years with the Military Counseling Network in Germany, where he counsels American troops who are seeking discharges from the military for reasons such as conscientious objection. MCN is supported by the German Mennonite Peace Committee, Mennonite Mission Network and Mennonite Central Committee. More information is available at www.mc-network.de.



Our blessed b

by Katie Boyts

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you … ?—1 Corinthians 6:19

Our relationship with our body often is wearisome, particularly in our "your-body-should-look-like-this" culture. And the idea of the body as a temple is prone to be purely theoretical, lacking any practical application in our daily lives. We may often leave connecting with God through a bodily experience to the mystics, finding ourselves uncomfortable with the mystical experience in general.

But I am fascinated with how to connect peacemaking, bodywork and our personal relationship with Christ and community.

In my peace studies thesis at Goshen (Ind.) College in 2005, I focused on how helping people cope with posttraumatic stress was a form of nonviolence. In my research I discovered a group looking at trauma differently from the traditional model. They argued that working directly with the body, rather than solely with the psyche in talk therapy, was highly effective for healing.

Three years later I completed a massage therapy program in Portland, Ore., and earned a license to touch the human body. I continue to find that (1) the practice of touch is a form of nonviolence; (2) touch has the capability to aid in the healing process, optimizing our self-healing capacity; (3) bodywork can be an integral part of our faith practice, a method of prayer, a practical way to connect with God.

With these ideas in mind during my studies in massage therapy, I felt drawn to Thai massage, which has its origin in Thailand at least 1,000 years ago. It has the characteristics of yoga, meditation and acupressure and is often described as passive or lazy yoga for the recipient and active yoga for the therapist. The inherent intimacy that comes with these movements calls the giver to maintain a heightened awareness of intention, breathing, pace, rhythm, the recipient's body language and energy movement in the body.

As I practice this massage I see increasingly the ability of bodywork to exemplify nonviolence and service as we provide well-intentioned touch, calm and connectedness. In Thai massage the therapist prostrates to the client in humility, asking that we increase awareness not only of the body but the presence of God among us. We therapists are to pray prior to touching the body and meditatively thank the tissue, the body and the person afterward.

Touch becomes a form of prayer, a way to connect, a radical, revolutionary act in this violence-saturated world.

In these moments I see more clearly how the body is a complex, God-created organism that shows me the magnitude of what violence and nonviolence means. The mechanism by which we experience these clarifying moments may be called the release of endorphins or the presence of Holy Spirit, but at its base this healing and shalom is God within me.

The human body is how we experience consciousness. Our hands, mouths, legs personify the way we understand the world around us and are the tools by which we create our culture, context and experience. Thus, if we view our bodies as weapons, they will be weapons, and we will interact with the world as weapons. And if we view the body as a healer, we will be healers, engaging in life as agents of healing.

Our physical actions can only personify what we believe, so shifting our perception of the body, and thus our consciousness, will shift our tendency toward violence. Violence is a sensual experience, and Christ practiced and taught nonviolence because of the sensual violation violence exhibits. Nonviolence can also be a sensual act and at times should be.

Bodywork challenges the common notions about the body that violence claims. The body is no longer an obstacle or collateral damage or a tool of weaponry; it is no longer an ambiguous way of interacting with the world; it becomes a tool of healing, a symbol of safety and comfort. Touch becomes a form of prayer, a way to connect and relate. It becomes a radical, revolutionary act in this violence-saturated world.

odies

How bodywork can be a way of nonviolence

For Mennonites, the practice of community is an essential piece of our understanding in living out our commitment to Christ. Our relationships are central to our experience. Bodywork is rooted in this belief. Intentional, healing touch only exists relationally, and viewing bodywork as a method of prayer or as a space created primarily for experiencing God's presence enhances this belief.

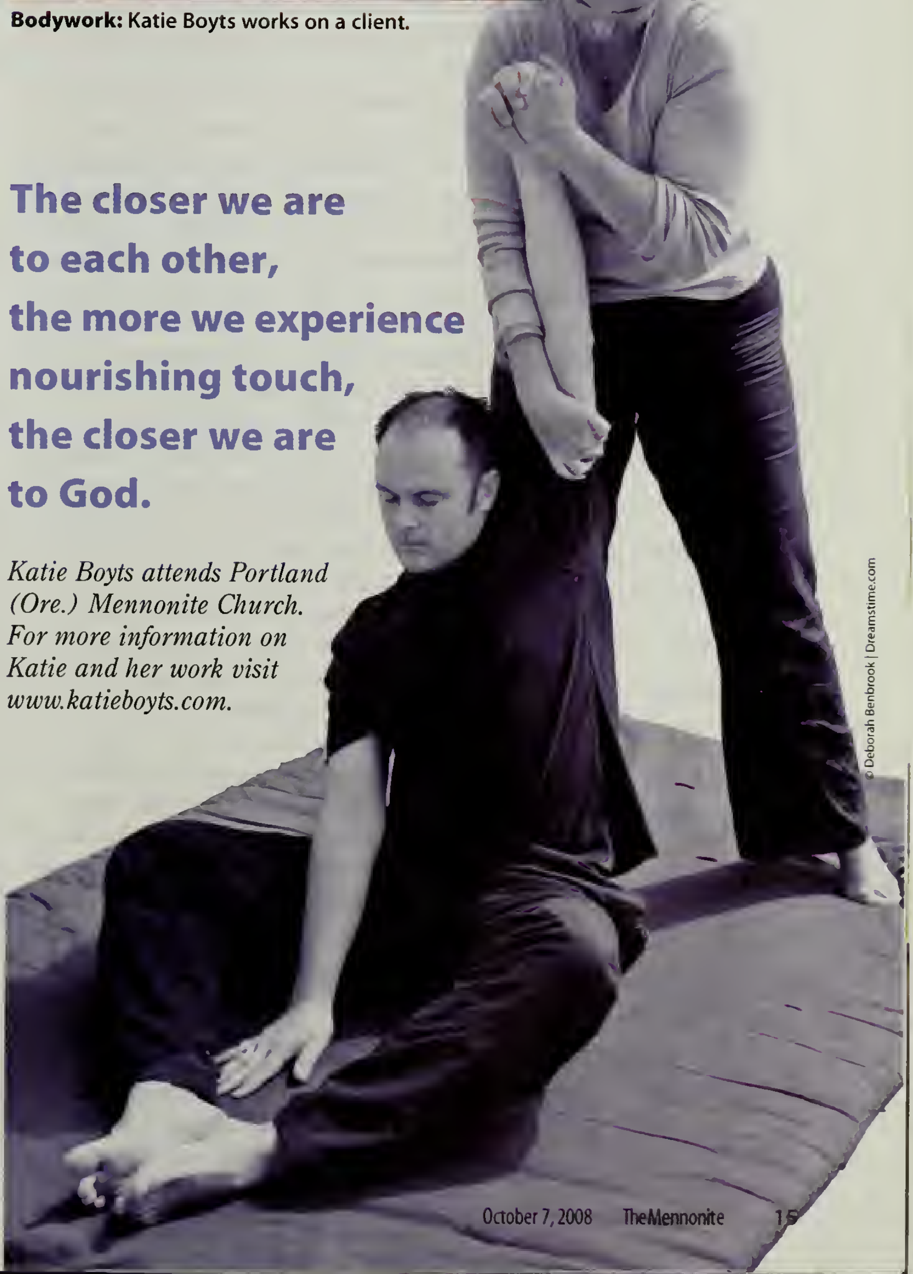
Matthew 18:20 reads, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Jesus demonstrated this in his healing ministry; he created connections with people primarily through touch, healing their afflictions, turning violence on its head by providing a contradiction to violence. His relationship to body, his own and those he taught, was one of connection and healing, lacking awkwardness or fear.

An example of this in our communities today is the laying-on-of-hands ritual. It remains a congregational practice for which I am increasingly grateful. Not long ago my congregation in Portland participated in laying on of hands, and though during prayer, when I felt the well-intentioned touch, no miracles occurred, and life remains a difficult task, I did feel something beautiful move in me, a physical sensation that communicated caring and Christ's love. It is in this space of touch that the Holy Spirit of the Triune God is most tangible. I invite God in. I invite the other in. I invite my whole self in.

Kathleen Norris quotes the sixth-century monk Dorotheus of Gaza, who saw our world as a circle, with God at the center and our lives as lines drawn from the circumference toward the center. The closer the lines crowd in toward God, the closer they are to one another, and the closer they are to one another, the closer they are to God.

This is a profound depiction of life: the closer we are to each other, the more we experience nourishing touch, the closer we are to God. And the closer we are to God, the more difficult it becomes to see violence as a sensible and justifiable act. These bodies, which are created in the image of God, hold God within them and act as tools of our agency, are magnificent, and so should be our relationship to them. Do we not know that our bodies are temples? Or do we know and simply choose not to understand?

Bodywork: Katie Boyts works on a client.



© Deborah Benbrook | Dreamstime.com

The closer we are to each other, the more we experience nourishing touch, the closer we are to God.

Katie Boyts attends Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church. For more information on Katie and her work visit www.katieboyts.com.

Five steps of faithful living in the city

A Mennonite

by Anita Hooley

My parents, grandparents (both sides) great-grandparents and my great-great-grandparents all grew up on farms. But I grew up in an urban area of a small city, and today I live in Pittsburgh, Pa., part of the 20th largest metropolitan area in the United States.

The profile of Mennonite Church USA in *Road Signs for the Journey* by Conrad L. Kanagy shows that in the last few decades Mennonites have been relocating from the agrarian dwelling places of their ancestors.

In 1972, 36 percent of Mennonites lived on farms, while 26 percent did in 1989 and just 12 percent today. Twice as many Mennonites live in large cities (of 250,000-plus) as did in 1989.

There is something wrong with the church if the mafia is doing a better job at serving the poor in our communities.

However, that number still accounts for only 10 percent of members of Mennonite Church USA. Being a Mennonite in a large city is still a fairly unique experience.

These numbers and my own interest led me to some questions: Is being a Mennonite (or a Christian) in the city different from being a Mennonite anywhere else? What unique things do Mennonites bring to the city, and what unique things does the city bring to us? How do we live most faithfully in urban areas?

I am far from an expert on this subject, and I do not have easy answers, but I suggest five steps of faithful living. These could be applicable anywhere, but I focus on the city, especially areas with people whose needs are ignored.

1. Be there.

I don't necessarily advocate that all Christians move to the most poverty-stricken, crime-filled parts of their cities (though I wonder what would happen if we did). I have been too challenged by spiritually focused friends to think everyone who is a "good Christian" is explicitly concerned with city issues.

In his book *Encounter God in the City*, Randy White explores the importance of locating yourself among the people to whom you are trying to minister so that you can perform the ministry of "suffering with" them. When you're fighting for social improvement in a poor neighborhood, living there means you're fighting for your neighborhood. When your garbage isn't picked up or your electricity isn't turned on, you notice and care, because it's happening to you. This adds empathy, reality and passion to one's call for improvement in the city.

2. Be there and see.

We've all heard the phrase "seeing is believing." Unless I see (and interact with) urban people on a daily basis, it becomes easy to forget about their suffering, rationalize their poverty and ignore my and my culture's part in shaping their versions of society. It is also easy to dismiss thoughts of how their ways of life and belief systems might (and should) challenge my theology.

In a novel by Salman Rushdie, a character offers an expanded version of this axiom: "What you believe depends on what you've seen—not only what is visible but what you are prepared to look in the face."

My beliefs about the city are not only influenced by what I see but by the perspective I bring. Being in a city with an understanding of God's concern for the city prepares me to look the suffering, oppression and hope of the city in the face.

3. Be there and know.

You can be somewhere, even see things there, but not really know much about the situation. Consider an example cited by Shane Claiborne in *The Irresistible Revolution*.

He and some friends had moved into an abandoned cathedral with some homeless locals in Philadelphia. A church in the area heard about the situation and donated a box of microwave popcorn to their cause. As they had no electricity or microwaves, the gift was useless.

When the local mafia heard of the situation, however, they sent over a bunch of bikes. The bikes proved invaluable for job transportation for the adults and recreation for the kids. Knowing the needs, the people and the culture in the place where you are is important. There is something wrong with the church if the mafia is doing a better job at serving the poor in our communities.

The apostle Paul provides an example of using

© Jose Gil | Dreamstime.com

situational and cultural knowledge for God's purposes. In Acts 17, Paul addresses people in Athens, one of the most highly-cultured cities of his day.

Paul shows knowledge of Athenian art and literature. He talks about touring the city and finding an altar with the inscription "to an unknown god." He then claims that his God, the one true God, is this unknown God the Athenians have been worshiping, and he quotes one of their own poets to support his point. Paul uses the high culture of this urban area to point its residents toward Christ.

4. Be there and choose.

In *The Secret Life of Bees*, a novel by Sue Monk Kidd, a precocious white teenager named Lily goes to live with three strong and intelligent black women. One of the women reflects on "the real problem with people." Lily characteristically interrupts and says the problem is that people "don't know what matters and what doesn't." The wise woman responds: "I was gonna say, The problem is they know what matters, but they don't choose it. You know how hard that is, Lily? … The hardest thing on earth is choosing what matters."

The Bible is filled with examples of people who chose what mattered, such as Daniel and Esther. Both were engaged in the urban culture where they lived in the time of Jewish exile (Daniel under Babylonian rule and Esther under Persian). Both had high positions in the foreign government.

But when it came down to it, they were not afraid to choose what mattered. Daniel refused to worship the Babylonian king and was thrown into the lion's den. Esther entered the king's chamber without being summoned and risked her life to reverse the order for the extermination of the Jews.

Both Daniel and Esther had great gifts and knowledge and had fully entered urban life. But what sets them apart is not their cultural or theological knowledge. Rather, they are honored for the strength of their choices to follow God's way in the midst of a city culture trying to force them in the opposite direction.

5. Be there and be transformed.

The final step of living faithfully in the city is working for the transformation of the city and letting yourself be transformed in that process.

Transformation best happens through relationships. I have witnessed the power and the struggle of transformative urban relationships modeled by my parents in my growing-up years in Canton, Ohio.

I have memories of my mother going for runs with the tall basketball player from down the street, doing jigsaw puzzles with the man from around the corner who suffered from schizophrenia or playing piano to accompany the former opera singer who was living at the YMCA. I remember my father having what seemed like daily phone conversations with various people who would call just because they had no one else to listen to them, or attending Cleveland Indians baseball games with a working-class couple and a recovering alcoholic.

I discovered later that my parents did not come to Canton out of any deliberate social or spiritual decision to minister in "the city." When I think about how focused on urban ministry I consider their lives, I realize they have not only transformed but have been transformed by the people and experiences there.

Even brief encounters with people different from us can transform our understanding.

Even brief encounters with people different from us can transform our understanding. In Matthew 15, Jesus runs into a Canaanite woman who begs him to heal her daughter. Jesus tells her, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." The woman pleads and argues with him, and Jesus changes his mind, blesses the woman and heals her daughter. It seems an encounter with someone of a different culture and gender transformed even Jesus' thinking about his own ministry.

Opportunities to have relationships and encounters with people from all walks of life are not limited to the city. But urban life provides a ripe abundance of weird, needy, refreshing people, as well as cultural perspectives to challenge and surprise us. And as we are transformed by these people and experiences, we can be engaged in transforming the people and places around us in more faithful ways.

Anita Hooley lives in Cleveland. She wrote this article while a pastoral intern at Pittsburgh Mennonite Church.

Why Mennonites play Halo

Travis Duerksen is a member of Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., and a student at Hesston (Kan.) College.

How do you, as a pacifist Mennonite, justify playing a violent game like Halo? was the question I got through the telephone one lazy afternoon. I stopped for a moment, nervously chuckling. "Um, well, you see. ..."

Halo 101: After the editor of *With* (where this article originally appeared in the Winter 2007/08 issue) hung up, I knew she expected me to write a small explanation or apology—I can't remember which—on how some pacifist Mennonites justify playing Halo.

Prepare to be disappointed.

First, let me give you a little background. Halo was released back in 2001 for the Xbox video game console. Since then, it has been released for PCs as well. It is rated M for mature, a rating similar to R for a movie, because of "blood and gore" and "violence."

The game revolves around a super-soldier named Master Chief whose goal is to stop an alien force, the Covenant, from destroying all humans.

During most of the game, you find yourself looking from the perspective of Master Chief. So if he is holding a weapon, you see his back and his hands holding it, and an aiming scope in the center of the screen.

You are expected to beat the game by depositing small fragments of lead—propelled at a high rate of speed—into the bodies of your enemies until the entrance and residence of these fragments impede the normal operation of any of their primary biological processes.

In short, you shoot the aliens until they die.

This immediately poses a problem, as you are put on the forefront of a war, spearheading an effort to rain destruction upon an alien race that wants to do the same to you.

No room for Anabaptists: Mennonites have taken a stance of peace when two groups create war with one another, but that is not possible in Halo. Nowhere does it allow you participate in peace negotiations or write up a truce.

Kill the aliens: In the single-player mode, killing your enemies is the only way to reach the end. While you are never pitted against other humans, you'll find yourself up against a variety of aliens, from half your size to three times as big, even zombie-like creatures, each with colorful blood.

The single-player game is very difficult to justify for a Mennonite. And it should be. Many people like to breeze over it with such phrases as, "It's just a game," and, "It's not real." But I can't.

Granted, I love playing Halo, and looking from the outside in I can see how easy it would be to call us Halo-playing Mennonites hypocrites. But in this case, the word is justified. How can we say we dislike war when we are participating in digital battles ourselves? While it's not outright hypocrisy—that would be declaring you're a pacifist but jumping at the chance to go to war—it is a form of it.

A kinder, gentler Halo: In the multiplayer-game mode, you and up to 15 of your friends can shoot it out in a variety of matches, the two main ones being Deathmatch (where you see who can score the most kills in a set amount of time) and Capture the Flag. The main problem here is that instead of aiming your gun at computer-controlled opponents you're gunning for an enemy that is controlled by your buddy sitting next to you.

But I view it as a competition between friends, much like a game of basketball or football. Like those sports, it's a place to show off what skills you love to brag about. And like those games, if you're not a team player you'll end up losing.

No big deal?

The thing is, to a lot of youth this moral dilemma isn't really a big deal at all. When I posed the question that I was asked to some of my friends, they all did the same thing I did. They chuckled.

Many of them simply admitted they hadn't really thought of it or that it's not that big of a deal. And I believe them. To us, this stuff really isn't that big of a deal.

Should it be?

To me, at least, if I really want to belong to the Mennonite church, and if I really want to live by its beliefs, I need to at least think it over, talk it out with a variety of people and, most importantly, pray about it.

Will it end with me giving up Halo and its ilk? I don't know yet. Will I be weighing the morals that a game is impressing on me from now on?

Oh yes. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Do you have 'pleonexia'?**—Valerie Weaver-Zercher
- **Not politics as usual**—Rod Stafford

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

Executive Board OKs health-care plan

Board encourages Spanish-language initiative, reviews The Mennonite.

Meeting Sept. 18-20 at Philadelphia Mennonite High School, the Executive Board (EB) of Mennonite Church USA gave its OK to a plan to provide health insurance coverage for all pastors and discussed an initiative to provide more resources in Spanish to congregations.

Keith Harder, director of the Health Care Access Project, reported the results of 27 focus groups in the past six months (see Sept. 2, page 19) and brought a recommendation that a health-insurance plan for pastors proceed. The plan, called the Corinthian Plan, is to be communicated to Mennonite Church USA members in the coming months and must be approved by delegates at Columbus 2009 next summer. If that happens, the plan should begin on Jan. 1, 2010, Harder said.

Project team members Karl Sommers and Greg Lacher offered their perspectives as well. Sommers said the plan emphasizes wellness. "This is more about the kind of church we want to be than [about] health insurance," he said.

EB members asked clarifying questions, then unanimously recommended that the Corinthian Plan be adopted by congregations and agencies.

In response to a request from EB, Iris de León-Hartshorn, director of intercultural relations, developed plans for a Spanish-language initiative in consultation with Iglesia Menonita Hispana. This five-year initiative moves from developing a pool of translators to creating material written in Spanish. A further goal is to catalog resources already available in Spanish and make them available in one place online and by phone.

EB members noted that Spanish speakers have been frustrated when trying to find materials done by different agencies. This needs coordination, they said. Moderator-elect Ed Diller asked, "How can we make this happen faster?"

It also needs ownership, said Ron Rempel, director of Mennonite Publishing Network. "We have Spanish-language curriculum gathering dust on the shelf."

EB member Glen Guyton said the need goes beyond language. Materials he sees don't fit his context as an African American in an urban area.

EB member Addie Banks said racial-ethnic groups are not all alike. She is writing curriculum herself, she said, because she hasn't found any that fit her context.

The board asked staff to work with churchwide agencies to reduce the five-year proposal to three.

EB members review one of the churchwide agencies every third meeting or so. At this meeting the board reviewed The Mennonite, Inc. (TM), an entity of Mennonite Church USA. TM's executive committee (Susan Sommer, Gerald Mast and Barth Hague) and editor Everett Thomas joined the discussion.

TM board members said they want to be collaborative with EB "and promote the ministries of and support identity building for Mennonite Church USA," as the bylaws state, but they've been given few opportunities to do so.

EB members continue to express that the TM board should move from being a governance board to being an editorial board, with *The Mennonite* being part of the communications and development work of the church.

In the end, the two boards agreed to form a task group to propose an editorial policy and how the magazine will operate under the EB in line with the purposes of *The Mennonite* as described in the Mennonite Church USA bylaws.

This EB meeting discussed leadership development, one of the board's four priorities. Members reviewed responses from area conferences, agencies and schools about leadership development.

The board liked the focus on competencies. However, said EB member David Boshart, "we have a ways to go to understand leadership from a missional perspective." He said we need to look at the role of context in leadership formation and close the gap between congregations' expectations of pastors and pastors' expectations of themselves.

In other activity, EB members

- asked staff to develop equitable employment guidelines and human resources policies across Mennonite Church USA that further the priorities of antiracism and leadership development;
- called for delegate materials to be available in English and Spanish;
- expressed support and prayers for the Colombian Mennonite Church;
- received a positive audit report for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31, 2008, and a balanced preliminary budget for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31, 2010.

The EB's next meeting is Jan. 22-24, 2009, in Glendale, Ariz.—*Gordon Houser*

This is more about the kind of church we want to be than [about] health insurance.
—Karl Sommers

This article is available as a podcast at www.The Mennonite.org

ONLINE

Executive Board meets local leaders, school staff

The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board held its meetings Sept. 18-20 at Philadelphia Mennonite High School. Principal Barbara Moses led a tour of the school and introduced the school's staff and four of its students. The board also met with representatives from Oxford Circle, Abundant Life Chinese, Vietnamese and West Philadelphia congregations in the city. These and other congregations build relationships so they can work together to address common concerns and bear witness to Christ.—*gh*

Gather 'Round connects ages

When Mennonite Publishing Network integrated its congregational worship resources and *Gather 'Round* Sunday school materials around a unified theme this past summer, Bonita Howard knew they were an answer to her prayers for connecting generations.

Howard, superintendent at Eden Mennonite Church in Moundridge, Kan., had been searching for ways to help youth and adults be less segregated. When Sunday worship suggestions in *Leader* (a magazine for congregational leaders) connected with *Gather 'Round* Sunday school curriculum for ages 3 through senior high and adults—it was just the push she needed for taking a risk.

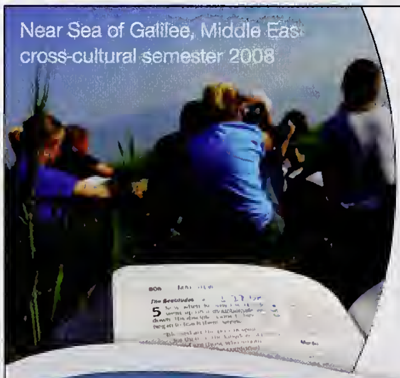
Howard formed two intergenerational Sunday school classes to focus on the unified theme, "The Things That Make for Peace" based on Matthew 5:43-45. Up to 40 adults and youth participated in a class for senior high and one for junior high. When summer ended, Howard surveyed participants, and many felt as positive as she.

"I knew that [the resources] would be a wonderful intergenerational curriculum," she says. "Peace happens when connections are made that help people value others who are different from themselves."

David Stevens—one of Eden's pastors—and pastors of other Mennonite Church USA congregations say the resources brought cohesion and depth to a season disjointed by vacation schedules.

"The consensus of all three pastors here was that the materials examined peace from angles that we hadn't considered, or needed to reconsider," he adds.—*Laurie Oswald Robinson*

> Peace happens when connections are made that help people value others who are different from themselves.
> —Bonita Howard



Near Sea of Galilee, Middle Eas
cross-cultural semester 2008

EMU prepares students to serve and lead in a global context

emu.edu

Jesus said: "Blessed are the peacemakers." Come join a community of faith, peacebuilding, learning and service.

(800) 368-2665 • admiss@emu.edu

Eastern Mennonite University
Harrisonburg, Va.

Joining **together.**
Investing in **hope.**

A campaign to build a facility and strengthen our mission.

www.MennoniteUSA.org/JoiningTogether

Mennonite Church USA
Executive Leadership
Mission Network

Pastors leaving for mostly good reasons

Mennonite Church Canada survey finds that 36 percent of pastors will quit.

How can Mennonite Church Canada congregations encourage their current pastors, former pastors and past pastors? That was the question Dieter Schoenwetter asked delegates at Mennonite Church Canada's annual assembly July 7 during the discernment session.

A social psychologist by profession, Schoenwetter gathered and interpreted the data from a pastoral trends survey sponsored by Mennonite Church Canada in late 2007.

Schoenwetter gave delegates an overview of the results, identified critical issues and linked the Mennonite Church Canada findings to similar findings in a 2006 survey conducted within the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. More than 200 past and present pastors, or roughly 20 percent of people who were sent the survey, responded.

While many pastors leave their position because of burnout, conflict or unclear expectations of their roles, Schoenwetter noted that more pastors leave for positive reasons, such as accomplishing their goals, advancing their career or changing roles, and continuing education.

One critical issue Schoenwetter noted was the need for more pastors, as Mennonite Church Canada will lose 36 percent of survey respondents alone within the next five years—not to mention those who will leave who did not respond to the survey.

"We are standing at the crossroads here," Schoenwetter said.

Role clarification, spiritual support, attrition, congregational support, educational support and training, and holistic support—including the way pastors are let go—were key issues Schoenwetter identified.

He concluded his presentation by asking delegates to ponder questions such as, "What makes fertile ground for pastoral formation?"

He encouraged delegates to write their ideas regarding how they can encourage their pastors on yellow sticky notes. Delegates then attached the yellow sticky notes to posters lining the hall as they exited the Canadian Mennonite University gymnasium, where delegate sessions were taking place.

Linda Bjarnas, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada delegate, wondered if any consideration had been given by the Mennonite Church Canada Christian Formation Council to helping congregations nurture children by identifying and affirming pastoral gifts early on.—*Aaron Epp*

Mennonite Church Canada

Dieter Schoenwetter shares results of a pastoral trends survey.

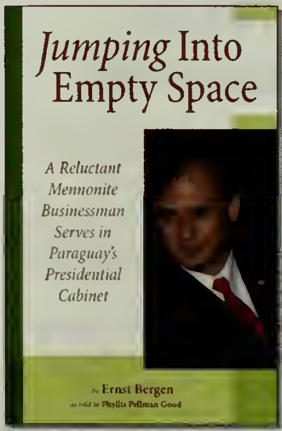
Specializing in web development and customized software

Ten Thousand Villages || Learn about fair trade, find unique gift ideas & purchase

http://www.tenthousandvillages.com/

TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES
Customer Assistance | My Account | Basket
Enter Keyword
Search
Place your order by phone at 1-877-883-83
SHOP
GIFT IDEAS
COLLECTIONS
GIFT REGISTRY
ARTISANS
FAIR TRADE
STORES & FESTIVALS
Home › Shop › Plant & Garden
LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com



Coming November 1

Jumping Into Empty Space
A Reluctant Mennonite Businessman Serves in Paraguay's Presidential Cabinet
by Ernst Bergen
as told to Phyllis Pellman Good

Ernst Bergen, a Mennonite businessman, became the Finance Minister of Paraguay. Boyhood in the Chaco. Tensions with authority. Courtship. Incredible business success. Thrust into government with all of its problems. This is the story of Ernst Bergen, as told to *New York Times* bestselling author Phyllis Pellman Good.

Ernst with Phyllis

More than 140 pages.
$11.95 (includes photos)

Good Books www.GoodBooks.com

MCC, MDS respond to hurricanes

Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Disaster Service address disasters.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) are accepting donations for emergency response to the recent hurricanes and tropical storms in the Caribbean and the Gulf Coast area.

MCC is responsible for organizing disaster response efforts in international settings. MDS is responsible to organize disaster response in Canada, the United States and their territories.

MCC is specifically accepting donations for the Caribbean country of Haiti, where the recent hurricanes and tropical storms have killed hundreds and left hundreds of thousands without shelter.

MCC is working through a partner organization, Sant Kretyen Developman Entegre (Christian Center for Integrated Development), to distribute water, food, medicine and health kits in northwestern Haiti. The northwestern city of Gonaïves remains flooded from hurricanes Gustav and Hanna. MCC has committed $35,000 for the initial Haiti response.

According to Mark Epp, MCC's associate director for Latin America and the Caribbean, MCC workers have not been able to travel to the north from headquarters in Port-au-Prince, the capital city. Heavy rains on Sunday brought down a key bridge, severing the only viable land route to Gonaïves.

MDS is actively responding to recent hurricanes that impacted Louisiana and Mississippi, and has an emergency response team working in Baton Rouge, La..

In Pass Christian, Miss., MDS project directors reported that the town and area look pretty good, with some debris around. The MDS site is also fine. There is electricity but no phones.

In conversation with FEMA, MDS is assessing the damage and has begun an initial response "to give a few people a little hope in the midst of this disaster," says Jerry Klassen, MDS disaster response coordinator.

MDS will establish work sites in partnership with other agencies and their case work systems. Many, especially elderly, are stranded without food, power and the ability to move around.

After the initial assessment, MDS hopes to know if the other crews can be invited to join and serve.

MDS is also evaluating the next steps for Des Allemandes and Pointe Aux Chenes, La., while also standing at the ready in anticipation of responding to the potential impacts of Hanna, Ike and Josephine.

The full extent of damage is unknown in the Point Aux Chenes area, although initial reports are that damage is as bad or worse than damage from Katrina. In talks with the Louisiana Coastal Tribal Coalition, Chief Marlene Foret reports that she cannot travel the whole way into her community because of water on the roads.

Chief Albert Naquin reports that because there is no water on Isle de Jean Charles they cannot start clean up. There is mud everywhere. Only two families out of about 60 are on the island now. In the first quarter mile of the island there are eight unlivable houses.—*Scott Sundberg of Mennonite Disaster Service and Cheryl Zehr Walker of Mennonite Central Committee*

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

What makes us different?

Rebate for missions

We tithe 10% of our interchange income from Visa credit cards to church and mission activities and group. Since 1995, we have made close to $200,000 in mission rebate grants.

Rebate for missions: Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.

www.mennonitefinancial.com

• • travel with a purpose • •

Mennonite Your Way

TOURS SPRING 2009

Hawaii 4-Island Cruise/Tour
March 11-22, 2009
- Polynesian Center & Luau
- Fern Grotto/Waimea Canyon
- Volcanoes National Park
- Macadamia Nut Factory
- Int'l Market & Waikiki Beach
- Dole Pineapple Center
- Begins from Honolulu

Mexico & Copper Canyon
March 27 - April 7, 2009
- Railroad through canyons & tunnels of Copper Canyon
- Mennonites of Cuauhtemoc
- Local Indian folklore
- Cathedrals & Ancient Ruins
- Learn about Border Issues
- Begins from Tucson, AZ

MYW Tours • Box 425 • Landisville, PA 17538 • 717/653-9288 • 800/296-1991
Email: myw1525@aol.com • web: www.mywtours.com

Delegation finds Philippine peace elusive

Mennonite World Conference Executive Committee members pray for General.

War is easy. It can happen right now. All it takes is a six-peso phone call to say 'start fighting,'" said General Ferrer of the Sixth division in August.

With 5,000 troops and 6,000 paramilitary personnel under his command, General Ferrer was ready. But he does not want war; he wants peace.

The Aug. 7 delegation of members of the Mennonite World Conference Executive Committee and of Mennonite Church Canada found his remarks humbling.

The delegation was visiting Mindanao, the southernmost and most troubled of the Philippine Republic's three major groups of islands. Three guerrilla groups are active there: the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front), the NPA (New People's Army—a Marxist-inspired group) and Abu Sayyaf (a small group with alleged al-Qaida ties).

Because of a partial cease-fire for the past two years, the delegation was able to travel into the region where MILF activity has been strong.

Two days earlier, the Philippine Supreme Court blocked the signing of an ancestral domain agreement between the government and the MILF. The agreement could have paved the way for the peace process to continue, potentially ending more than four decades of conflict in the south Philippines, but its delay only served to fuel tension.

The delegation asked the General, a graduate of the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute, supported now by Mennonite Church Canada, how he put his peace training into practice.

"I learned to listen and not just hear," he said. "I also send my men to train there. … They wonder how a warrior can also be a peace builder. It has created a bit of conflict within them."

General Ferrer confirmed reports that the government gave rebels 24 hours to end skirmishes in the region or face intervention from government forces. He was frustrated by local petitions that delayed the signing of an ancestral domain agreement. He also expressed uncertainty about what immediate effect the government order would have on regional conflict.

"If you could write tomorrow morning's newspaper headlines, what would you write?"asked a delegation member.

His response was heart-wrenching: "General Ferrer ready for war." He said the headline would let renegade MILF members know the army is serious, ready, organized, potentially halting further rebel assaults and reinstating peace talks. The delegation ended the visit by praying for Ferrer.

Just three hours before meeting with General Ferrer, the Mennonite delegation sat with leaders of the MILF as they determined strategic reactions to the stalled agreement. MILF are members of the Mindanao Alliance for Peace.

Ferrer's headline didn't make it into the paper, and he did not make a phone call to launch war. The MILF pulled back its troops. Since the Mennonite delegation's visit, however, peace talks between the government of the Republic of the Philippines and the MILF have stalled. Serious fighting has resulted, and 160,000 people have fled their homes and villages.—*Janet Plenert of Mennonite Church Canada, with Peter Stucky*

Delegation participants

- Naomi Unger
- Peter Stucky
- Markus Rediger
- Janet Plenert
- Irene and Robert J. Suderman

We came for the Values, and the Value.

MENNO HAVEN
Relationships. Values. Options.
MENNO VILLAGE • NORTHFIELD • PENN HALL
800.222.6695 www.mennohaven.org
Menno Haven is committed to providing equal housing for all.

In one year, almost $70,000 was given to Mennonite congregations at giving.MennoniteUSA.org.
How much went to your church?

Take your giving online to
giving.MennoniteUSA.org

Mennonite Church USA

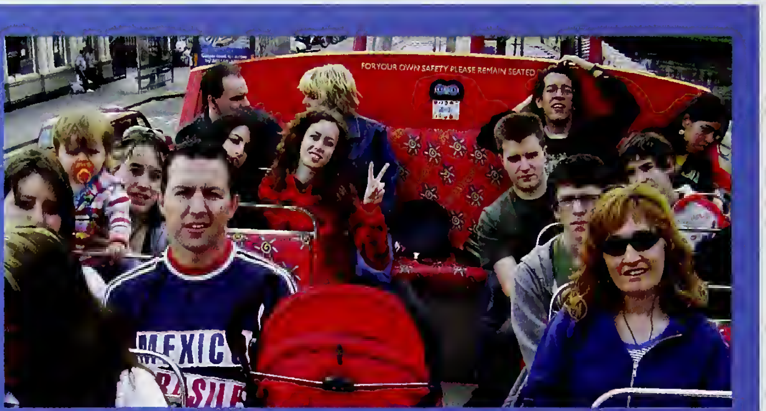


Photo provided

Spanish youth group shares their faith in United Kingdom

The Burgos (Spain) Mennonite Community youth group travels in the United Kingdom July 28-Aug. 11, ministering through coffeehouses.
—Mennonite Mission Network

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business.

Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

timely tip:
Check your smoke alarms!

Senior Investment Officer

MMA is seeking an investment officer to provide development, oversight, and support of the delivery of MMA's non-proprietary investment platform. Qualified candidates will have an undergraduate degree in business or related field; minimum 5 years significant investment experience; Series 65 license; CFP® or ChFC designation.

MMA, a stewardship solutions organization affiliated with Anabaptist denominations, provides insurance and financial services. We are an equal opportunity employer offering a competitive salary and excellent benefits. For more information about this position, visit our Web site, www.mma-online.org. Send cover letter and resume to:

MMA
Human Resources
P.O. Box 483
Goshen, IN 46527
careers@mma-online.org
Fax: (574) 537-6635

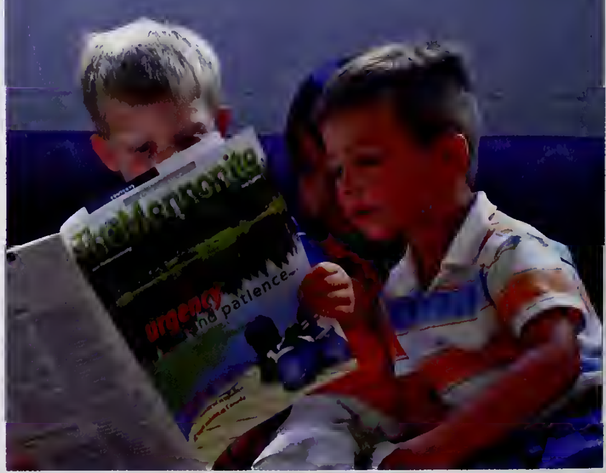
MMA®

Group savings

By subscribing ***today*** with other members of your congregation or community you can enjoy *The Mennonite*'s inspiring commentary, news, editorials and articles at a group discount. Receive bimonthly issues packed full of material that will challenge and inspire you. *The Mennonite* provides a forum for voices within Mennonite Church USA, encourages the ministries of our denomination and helps members build loyalty to our church.

To subscribe as a group, log onto our Web site at **www.TheMennonite.org** or call Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498.**

TheMennonite



WORKERS

Brouillette, Mike, was licensed as youth pastor at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., on Aug. 22.

Cazares, Jaime, was licensed for special ministry as church planter at Iglesia Menonita Casa Betania, Newton, Kan., on Aug. 22.

Graber, Gail, was ordained as associate pastor of visitation at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., on Aug. 22.

Hostetler, Marian Brendle, ended a term as pastor to seniors at North Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Aug. 31.

Kanagy, Renee, was licensed as pastor at New Creation Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., on Aug. 22.

Kaufmann, Lois Johns, began a position as conference minister for Central District Conference, Goshen, Ind., on Sept. 1.

Ricketts, Carole, was licensed as pastor at Michigan State University Mennonite Fellowship, East Lansing, Mich., on Sept. 14.

Yoder, Amanda "Mandy," was installed as associate pastor at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., on Sept. 7.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bame, Grace Marcelle, Sept. 20, to Rich and Julie Kuntz Bame, Wauseon, Ohio.

Banman, Miles Elliot, July 20, to Aaron and Lindsay Smith Banman, Chicago, Ill.

Coblentz, Mia Claire, July 8, to Seth and Lindsey Burkholder Coblentz, Greentown, Ohio.

Ebright Zehr, Holden Eli, Aug. 28, to Marcus and Robin Ebright Zehr, Goshen, Ind.

Gochenaur, Aubrey Irene, Sept 9, to Scott and Jennifer Mohler Gochenaur, Willow Street, Pa.

Hendricks, Micaiah Emerson, Aug. 29, to Matthew and Shelly Hendricks, Minneapolis, Minn.

Hipps, Hadley Margaret, July 18, to Shane and Andrea Berry Hipps, Phoenix, Ariz.

Horne, Mara Ruth, Aug. 30, to Daniel and Jennifer McCullough Horne, Niverville, Manitoba.

Miller, Chelsea Nicole, Aug. 28, to Ryan and Heidi Kauffman Miller, Hartville, Ohio.

Moser, Seth Aaron, April 28, to Joshua and Lisa Akin Moser, Carthage, N.Y.

Nofziger, Andre Daniel, Aug. 31, to Wendell and Melanie Byler Nofziger, Stryker, Ohio.

Osborne, Iris Katherine, Aug. 14, to Troy and Emma Osborne, Bluffton, Ohio.

Paulovich, Owen Reid, June 9, to Jon and Gretchen Stoltzfus Paulovich, Phoenix, Ariz.

Shank, Laela Joy, Sept. 4, Josh and Sarah Roth Shank, Harrisonburg, Va.

Strausz, Samantha Marie, Sept. 11, to Jarrod and Jennifer Snyder Strausz, Moundridge, Kan.

Tolle, Adrianna Marie, Sept. 3, to George and Kristian Sawyer Tolle, Wichita, Kan.

Widrick, Winton Walter, May 25, to Kyle and Jessica Zehr Widrick, Croghan, N.Y.

Winsor, Lela Marie, July 2, to Mike and Vania Blough Winsor, Hesston, Kan.

MARRIAGES

Adrian/Unruh: Sara Adrian, Butterfield, Minn., and Nicholas Unruh, Newton, Kan., Aug. 9, at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton.

Barnes/Unruh: Melissa Barnes and Daniel Unruh, Peabody, Kan., July 25, at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, Divide, Colo.

Dobes/Shultz: Pete Dobes, Toledo, Ohio, Kristy Shultz, Dalton, Ohio, June 28, at Cornerstone Church, Dalton.

Graber/Luty: Alex Graber, Crawfordsville, Iowa, and Ashley Luty, Wichita, Kan., July 19, at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita.

Graber/Petersen: Tracy Graber, Hurley, S.D., and Brett Petersen, Hurley, Aug. 9, at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Hansen/Musser: Erica Hansen, Kingston, N.Y., and Greggory Musser, Mount Joy, Pa., Aug. 10, at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Kingston.

Hershberger/Liechty: Ben Hershberger, Sugarcreek, Ohio, and Beth Liechty, Archbold, Ohio, Sept. 6, at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Nussbaum/Ulery: Kendel Nussbaum, Phoenix, Ariz., and Jacki Ulery, Phoenix, June 8, at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

Parker/Yoder: Margaret Parker, Wichita, Kan., and Nathaniel Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va., Aug. 2, at Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va.

Pennington/Stauffer: Garrett Pennington, Hesston, Kan., and Erin Stauffer, Hesston, Kan., Sept 13, at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Preheim/Sees: Stacy Preheim, Marion, S.D., and George Sees, Irene, S.D., Sept. 20, at St. Benedict Catholic Church, Yankton, S.D.

Rupp/Steiner: Jennifer Rupp, Pettisville, Ohio, and LaMont Steiner, Dalton, Ohio, Sept. 13, at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St.,
Goshen, IN
46526-4794

INVITING
Mennonite/Anabaptist
Pastors to Projects

Through a generous grant MDS is offering travel cost reimbursement to constituent pastors volunteering* at an MDS project site for a week or more.

For more details see **http://mds.mennonite.net/programs/pastors_projects/** or call Lois at **866-261-1274**

*VOLUNTEERING: swinging a hammer with other short-term crew members!

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

Schmidt/Shorthill: Luke Schmidt, Peabody, Kan., and Sarah Shorthill, July 5, at Bontanica Gardens, Wichita, Kan.

DEATHS

Baer, Catherine Neuhauser, 85, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 29. Spouse: Joseph F. Baer. Parents: William and Anna Swartzentruber Neuhauser. Children: Joseph N., David L.; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 6 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Bishop, Jacob H., 92, Telford, Pa., died Aug. 23. Spouse: Clara Thoms Bishop. Spouse: Evelyn Freed Bishop (deceased). Parents: Warren and Ida Hess Bishop. Children: Ruth Ann Fite, Jacob, Craig, Elizabeth Goad, Harry Sheets; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 26 at Blooming Glen Mennonite Church, Blooming Glen, Pa.

Bishop, Luella H., 93, Quakertown, Pa., died Sept. 6. Parents: Warren and Ida Hess Bishop. Funeral: Sept. 14 at Blooming Glen Mennonite Church, Blooming Glen, Pa.

Boliver, Clara Martin, 71, Croghan, N.Y., 71 died July 29. Spouse: Lyle Boliver (deceased). Parents: Vernon and Katherine Zehr Martin. Children: Larry, Lynn, Loren, Shawn, LuAnn Denise, Lynette Taylor, Laurie Boliver; 12 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 2 at Croghan Mennonite Church.

Chupp, Edward Ray, 89, La Fontaine, Ind., died Aug. 13. Spouse: Ardith Marie Johnston Chupp. Parents: Ira J. and Katie Stutzman Chupp. Funeral: Aug. 18 at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind.

Flaming, Vernon E., 82, Inman, Kan., died Aug. 30. Spouse: Leola Zehr Flaming. Parents: John P. and Anna Ediger Flaming. Children: John, Bill, Russell, Carol Hancock; nine grandchildren. Memorial service: Sept. 5 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Franz, Earl R., 92, Reedley, Calif., died Sept. 5. Spouse: Bernice Borthwick Franz. Spouse: Estella Fast Franz (deceased). Parents: John and Lena Franz. Children: Carolyn Peters, Darryl, Bonnie Runjavac; five grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at Reedley Cemetery.

Gaeddert, Elmer L., 87, Inman, Kan., died Sept. 7. Spouse: Elfrieda Duerksen Gaeddert. Parents: P.R. and Lena Janzen Gaeddert. Children: Lyle, Palmer; one grandchild; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 12 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Garges, Eva Wile, 96, Harleysville, Pa., died Sept. 1. Spouse: Vincent K. Garges (deceased). Parents: Jacob S. and Mary Landis Wile. Children: Henry W., Paul W.; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 5 at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Hoover, Charles "Chuck" Ellis, 58, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 19. Spouse: Naomi Elaine Brubaker Hoover. Parents: Ned G. and Grace Geraldine Larsen Hoover. Children: Rebecca Hoover, Laura Mathew, Rachel Hoover; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Immel, Glenn, 85, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Aug. 31. Spouse: Oneta Immel (deceased). Parents: William and Elva Stutzman Immel. Children: Wayne, Gene, Nancy Strother, Betty Kandel, Charlotte Keim, Judy Yoder, Don, Carolyn Renner; 19 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 3 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

Kanagy, Rachel Byler, 90, Belleville, Pa., died Aug.17. Spouse: Norman B. Kanagy (deceased). Parents: John B. and Annie Yoder Byler. Children: Aquilla L., Norman M., Salina A. Rhodes, John T., Irene J. Kanagy, Floyd S., Adella S. Ozar, Joseph A., Marvin R., Darvin J., Leonard R., Mary Beth Rush, Jay; 25 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 20 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Lehman, Gilbert J., 84, Croghan, N.Y., died April 27. Spouse: Esther M. Roggie Lehman. Parents: Elmer and Rosella Roggie Lehman. Children: Paul, Timothy, David, Walter, Kathleen Widrick; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 2 at Croghan Mennonite Church.

'Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation' filed Oct. 1, 2008, for The Mennonite, publication no. 17-2340, published twice-per-month (24 issues in preceding 12 months) at 1700 S. Main St, Goshen, Elkhart County, IN 46526. Phone 574-535-6051. Annual subscription price, $43.95. Publisher, The Mennonite Magazine Board; editor, Everett J. Thomas, at above office address. Owned and published by The Mennonite, Inc., Goshen, Ind. (above mailing address), a church-related non-profit organization, tax exempt under code section 501(c)(3). Stockholders owning 1 percent or more of total stock, none. (No stock issued.) Known bondholders, etc., none. The purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes has not changed during the preceding 12 months.

Extent and Nature of Circulation

A. Avg. total number of copies (net press run) each issue during preceding 12 months, 10,750. B. Avg. paid and/or requested circulation: (1) Avg. paid/requested outside-county mail subscriptions stated on Form 3541, 9,794. C. Avg. total paid and/or requested circulation, 9,794. G. Avg. total distribution, 9,974. H. Copies not distributed, 525. I. Avg. total copies, 10,499. J. Avg. percent paid and/or requested circulation, 98.20.

A. Total number of copies (net press run) each issue during preceding 12 months,10,500. B. Paid and/or requested circulation: (1) Paid/requested outside-county mail subscriptions stated on Form 3541, 9,308. C. Total paid and/or requested circulation, 9,308. G. Total distribution, 10,164. H. Copies not distributed, 336. I. Total copies,10,500. J. Percent paid and/or requested circulation, 91.58.

I certify that all information furnished in this is true and complete.
Everett J. Thomas, Editor

Paraguay 2009
Mennonite World Conference
Assembly Gathered
Asunción, Paraguay
14-19 July 2009
Assembly Scattered across Latin America and the Caribbean before and after Assembly Gathered
REGISTER NOW!
www.mwc-cmm.org
God is calling us to Paraguay...
¡Vamos!
"Come together in the way of Jesus Christ."
—Philippians 2:1-11

Lind, Miriam Sieber, 88, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 24 of cancer. Spouse: Millard Charles Lind. Parents: Charles and Bertha Shoemaker Sieber. Children: Dan, Matthew, Dirk Vardaman, Jonathan, Timothy, James, Sarah Lind; 18 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 31 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Miller, Melvin Ira, 87, South Bend, Ind., and Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 18. Spouse: Pauline Kenagy Miller. Parents: Ira S. and Fannie Mae Bender Miller. Children: David, Barbara Cote; four grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 22 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend.

Miller, Ursula M. Swartzendruber, 91, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 17. Spouse: Annas Miller (deceased). Parents: John A. and Katie Yoder Swartzendruber. Children: Francis, Loren, Marcia E. Miller, Karen Ventura, Galen; 11 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 21 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Moyer, Sara G. Rice, 88, Hilltown, Pa., died Sept. 16 of coronary artery disease and dementia. Spouse: Frank A. Moyer (deceased). Children: Charles, Lamar, James, Richard, David, Dean, Susan Moyer Freed; 16 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 20 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Rodgers, Ruth Virginia Green, 86, Iowa City, Iowa, died Sept. 7 following a short illness. Spouse: Samuel C. Rodgers (deceased). Parents: Joseph Warren and Myrtle Mullinex Green. Children: Elnora Smith, Esther Bickford; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 10 at First Mennonite Church, Iowa City.

Sharp, David D., 95, New Holland, Pa., died Sept. 9. Spouse: Alta Stoltzfus Sharp (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Fannie Detweiler Sharp. Children: Merle, Donald, Dennis, Kenneth; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial: Sept. 13 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Showalter, Edith Virginia Rhodes, 87, Harrisonburg, Va., died Aug. 31. Spouse: Owen Franklin Showalter, Sr. (deceased). Parents: Webster Clay and Sara Mabel Showalter Rhodes. Children: Sharon S. Harman, Harley R., Stuart W., H.D. Hollis, O. Franklin, J.R., Ruel J., Welby C., Myron J., 15 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 3 at Trissels Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va.

Springer, Ada M. Stalter, 101, Chenoa, Ill., and Flanagan, Ill., died Sept. 1. Spouse: Homer Springer (deceased). Parents: Henry and Mary Stalter Stalter. Children: Ruth Ann Rogers, Joyce S. Shafer, Wilma, two grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Prairieview Mennonite Church, Gridley, Ill.

Steria, Dorothy M. Gadbaw, 87, Croghan, N.Y., died July 17. Spouse: Ernest W. Steria (deceased). Parents: George and Mabel Coyer Gadbaw. Children: Verna Schack, Betty Bush, Bessie Chartrand, Dorothy Moser, Jane Widrick, Diane Steria, Gloria Zehr, Cindy Leaf; 17 grandchildren; many great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 19 at Croghan Mennonite Church.

Unruh, C. Howard, 78, Goessel, Kan., died Aug. 26 of an aortic aneurism. Spouse: Esther Voth Unruh. Parents: Jacob E. and Hannah Wedel Unruh. Children: Tom, John, Fred, Bill; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 29 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Unternahrer, Noah, 90, Wayland, Iowa, died Aug. 29. Spouse: Barbara Elizabeth Wenger Unternahrer. Parents: Christian and Anna Rediger Unternahrer. Children: Kathryn Smith, Ronald, David, Rosetta Koerner, Esther Amstutz, Norman; 11 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 2 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Voth, Paul R., 84, Inman, Kan., died Aug. 14. Spouse: Eva Mae Pippett Voth. Parents: John C. and Anna Nickel Voth. Children: Gary, Darrell, Michael; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Wedel, Kenneth Eugene, 73, Moundridge, Kan., died Sept. 17 in a work related accident. Spouse: Mae Swanson Wedel. Parents: Herman and Christina Voran Wedel. Children: Charlene Mosier. Funeral: Sept. 22 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.

Weichman, Robert Chris, 66, Flanagan, Ill., died Aug. 11 of a lung infection and blastomycosis. Spouse: Kethy Diane Albrecht Weichman. Parents: Chris and Anna Folkerts Weichman. Children: Jackie Iverson, Brad, Brent, Jeff; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 14 at Prairieview Mennonite Church, Gridley, Ill.

Witmer, Vernon Daniel, 83, Columbiana, Ohio, Sept. 4. Spouse: Vera Horst Witmer. Parents: Ezra and Lula Shaum Witmer. Children: Lois Sauder, Vernon, Richard, Donald; 10 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana.

Yoder, LaFerne Salome Brenneman, 91, Wellman, Iowa, died Aug. 23 following a lengthy illness. Spouse: Ray M. Yoder. Parents: Emery and Alice Bender Brenneman. Children: Myrna Kaufman, Charlene Rhodes, Katherine Leichty, Rosalyn Miller, Arlis; 11 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; two step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 26 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Paraguay & Peru

Join

Everett and Barbara Thomas
in Paraguay for
Mennonite World Conference
and then beautiful Peru

ITINERARY*

July 12, 2009	Overnight flight to Asunción
July 13	Asunción
July 14-18	MWC Assembly Gathered
July 19	Worship/free time in Asunción
July 20	Hospital Mennonita, Iguassu Falls
July 21	Flight to Lima, Peru
July 22	Lima and Cuzco
July 23	Cuzco and the "Sacred Valley"
July 24	Machu Picchu "Lost City of the Incas"
July 25	Free/Machu Picchu (optional)
July 26-27	Return flight home

Everett Thomas is a veteran of four Mennonite World Conference assemblies and can put your experience with the 2009 Assembly Gathered into the context of the previous 20 years.

*Itinerary is subject to change. For complete details including the tour itinerary, rates and inclusions, please contact:

Tara Nisley, Group Travel Specialist
Menno Travel Service
Phone: 574-975-7766 or 866-606-6198
Email: tara@mennotrav.com
Web site: www.mennotrav.com

Singles are invited to **Spruce Lake Retreat** Dec. 5-7, 2008, for a weekend of fellowship, worship and fun. Spruce Lake is located in the beautiful Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. Singles-friendly retreat package, $185/person. Call 800-822-7505 for reservations; www.sprucelake.org.

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference seeks a self-motivated, visionary and missional-minded ***executive conference minister*** who will help us live into a newly defined mission: promoting personal spiritual development, nurturing healthy congregations, making strong connections and calling each other to fulfill God's purpose. The successful candidate will be ordained, able to be ordained or have pastoral or chaplaincy experience. See the full job description at www.pnmc.org. Women and racial/ethnic people are encouraged to apply, bilingual proficiency is preferred (Spanish/English). Remuneration will be consistent with denominational Salary Guidelines. Applicants should submit letter of interest and completed Ministerial Leadership Information form (http://www.mennoniteusa.org/Portals/0/MLI/) to PNMC Search Committee, c/o David Hockman-Wert, 420 SE Richland Ave., Corvallis, OR 97333, or dhwert@yahoo.com. Applications will be reviewed beginning Nov. 1. Expected start date: Feb. 1, 2009.

Residential director: **Peaceful Living**, a small, Mennonite sponsored not-for-profit agency serving people with intellectual disabilities, located in Harleysville, Pa., seeks an individual with strong leadership and technical skills to lead the development of our residential services. Job responsibilities include recruitment, training and retention of staff, coordinating all referrals and placement activities, including intake, training and care of adults in apartments and/or group home settings, serving as a liaison between PL and state officials, and meeting all licensing standards. Requirements: proven experience of leading residential programs, master's degree preferred. Full job description is available at: http://www.peacefulliving.org/docs/Employment.aspx. Submit resumé to jlandis@peacefulliving.org or fax 610-287-2171.

Director of nursing. Have a passion for providing senior care? So do we. **Landis Homes**, a continuing-care retirement community in Lititz, Pa., is seeking a DON to work collaboratively with our experienced team. Supervisory and long-term care experience are required, DON experience preferred. Openness to change and flexibility are key as we strive to enable resident choice. Position is salaried and full-time: 1001 East Oregon Road, Lititz, PA 17543; 717-581-3936; www.landishomes.org. EOE.

Eastern Mennonite University, located in Virginia's scenic Shenandoah Valley, seeks qualified candidates for the position of ***provost***. The provost serves as chief academic officer of the university and supervises numerous administrative offices. The provost provides leadership and vision for internal functions of the university and develops cooperative relationships among university programs, departments and divisions. The provost assists the president in representing the university to church, community and educational constituent groups. Qualifications include earned doctorate; successful teaching, leadership, administrative and interpersonal experience at the college or university level; membership in or willingness to affiliate with an Anabaptist congregation; and knowledge of the Mennonite church with a commitment to the mission of Mennonite/Anabaptist higher education. To apply send a letter of application and curriculum vitae or resumé to Loren Swartzendruber, President, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email lorens@emu.edu. For more information, visit our Web site: www.emu.edu/humanresources.

Associate pastor for youth ministry, half-time position. Growing congregation, Rocky Mountains. For details contact Bruce Kuhns, 719-596-1718. **Beth-El Mennonite Church**, Colorado Springs, Colo.

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (January 3-13)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
GREAT TREK TOUR 2009 (May 24-June 4)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE TOUR (June 4-17)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (June 5-18)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-20)
MWC #1 / #2 / #3 / #4 / #6 - A Few Seats Available
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and PERU (July 12-28)
MWC #7 - PARAGUAY and IGUAZU FALLS (July 8-20)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (July 31-August 13)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (October 24-November 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2010 TOURS

AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 5-25)
WITH OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY:
SPRINGTIME in HOLLAND, BELGIUM & GERMANY (May 6-17)
LUTHERAN HOLY LAND TOUR (May 8-19)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 1-14)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA & ITS FJORDS (June 13-28)
PENNSYLVANIA to EUROPE (June 19-July 2)
ISRAEL/PALESTINE (June 24-July 5)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (June 29-July 12)
ITALY, AUSTRIA & GERMANY (July 7-17)
ENGLAND and SCOTLAND (July 23-August 4)
SWISS GLACIER EXPRESS (July 29-August 11)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with PAUL ZEHR (September 5-18)
THE ROAD to JERUSALEM (September 11-22)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE for GERMAN-SPEAKING PERSONS (September 16-29)

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451 FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

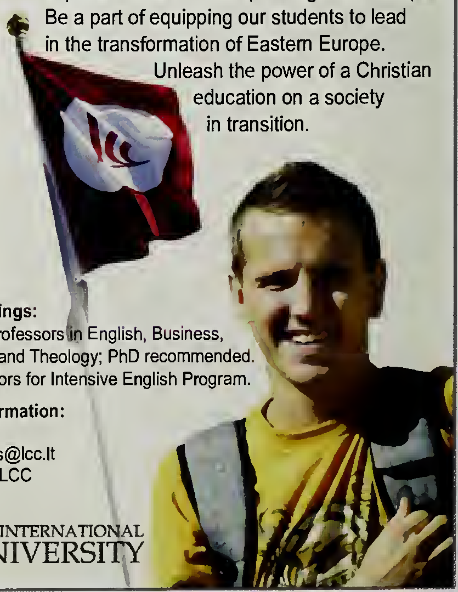
9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

help me **change** my world
teach English
transform lives
influence society

Feeling adventurous? Looking for a new challenge? Take your teaching to Lithuania. We are looking for instructors to teach English. But teaching English is only the beginning. Join us as we engage students in an educational experience that allows them to explore faith and develop caring relationships. Be a part of equipping our students to lead in the transformation of Eastern Europe. Unleash the power of a Christian education on a society in transition.



Current Openings:
University professors in English, Business, Psychology and Theology; PhD recommended.
EFL Instructors for Intensive English Program.

For more information:
www.lcc.lt
opportunities@lcc.lt
1 888 4 ELI LCC

LCC INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

CLASSIFIED

Germantown Mennonite Church seeks ***interim pastor*** for thriving urban congregation in Philadelphia for 12-18 months. With 100 regular members, GMC is an open and affirming congregation, active in worship leadership, arts and peace/social action. Seeking experienced pastor to lead in discipleship and spiritual growth during a successful search for a permanent pastor. www.germantownmennonite.org. Inquiries: 21 West Washington Lane, Germantown, PA 19144-2601; gmcsearch@gmail.com.

***Ski youth retreat package*, Timberline Four Seasons Resort, W.Va.,** starting at $99 a night plus tax. Includes lodging, meals, lifts, skis, lesson. Info: www.timberlineresort.com; 800-392-0152. West Virginia Wild and Wonderful.

Mennonite Publishing Network seeks a ***full-time director of marketing and sales*** to lead its marketing and customer service team. Responsibilities include: managing all aspects of marketing operations; overseeing and working with existing staff in congregational and trade sales; developing and leading new initiatives in direct marketing (internet, email, exhibits); providing input into product selection; overseeing customer service; serving on the management team. Qualifications: college degree in marketing with three or more years of experience in marketing management; proven ability to carry out results-oriented marketing strategies and to effectively lead staff; excellent interpersonal relationship skills and ability to communicate well both orally and in writing; good knowledge of electronic media in a sales and marketing strategy; enthusiasm about the mission of Mennonite Publishing Network; member of a congregation in Mennonite Church USA or Mennonite Church Canada. Contact Ron Rempel, executive director, Mennonite Publishing Network; rrempel@mpn.net; 800-631-6535.

***English conversation teachers needed*.** Connexus, a **Korea Anabaptist Center** ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Language and literature vacancy. **Eastern Mennonite University** announces a ***full-time, ongoing faculty position*** in Spanish beginning Fall 2009. Ph.D. in Spanish, or related field, preferred; Teaching experience required. Native speaker preferred; near-native fluency required. Provide leadership for a robust Spanish and Spanish education program offered within the context of a campus committed to "educating students to serve and lead in a global context" as well as lead in the further development of a foreign language program. Teaching areas include upper-level Spanish with preference for candidates with expertise in linguistics, pedagogy and literature. Salary and rank determined by education and experience. Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Marie S. Morris, Vice President and Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. http://www.emu.edu. Applicants will be acknowledged by letter. Review begins immediately. Applicants will be asked to respond to questions specific to EMU's mission after the initial inquiry. EMU reserves the right to fill the position at any time or keep the position open. AAEO employer. We seek applicants who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity.

Dr. Tony Campolo will be leading men's retreat at **Spruce Lake Retreat** Jan. 8-9, 2009 (Pocono Mts., northeastern Pa.). To be challenged to deeper, active discipleship, call 800-822-7505. Package: $99/person (www.sprucelake.org).

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

RESOURCES

Family Violence: Reclaiming a Theology of Nonviolence by Elizabeth Soto Albrecht (Orbis Books, 2008, $20) demonstrates how a feminist theology of nonviolence rooted in the Anabaptist tradition can be effective in overcoming family violence.

Dancing Through Thistles in Bare Feet: A Pastoral Journey by Gary Harder (Herald Press, 2008, $15.99) creates a candid and lively conversation between experience and reflection, between the biblical witness and the stark reality of conflict in the church, between crisis and opportunity for ministry.

Changing Paradigms: Punishment and Restorative Discipline by Paul Redekop (Herald Press, 2008, $18.99) says the practice of punishment is a major obstacle to healthy societies, families and schools and should be replaced with restorative discipline.

Good Punishment? Christian Moral Practice and U.S. Imprisonment by James Samuel Logan (Eerdmans, 2008, $20) critiques the American obsession with imprisonment as punishment, calling it "retributive degradation" of the incarcerated.

A Theology of Inclusivism by Neal Punt (Northland Books, 2008, $18.45) teaches that all people are elect in Christ except those the Bible expressly declares will be finally lost, namely, those who ultimately reject or remain indifferent to whatever revelation God has given of himself to them.

Bully Bill by Joe Birky, illustrated by Chad Thompson (Herald Press, 2008, $12.99), is a children's story for ages 6 and up that can serve as a springboard for parent-child conversations on bullying, being kind to enemies and using love to overcome evil.

Reframing Theology and Film: New Focus for an Emerging Discipline, edited by Robert K. Johnston (BakerAcademic, 2008, $24.99) draws together more than a dozen scholars who regularly write and teach on theology and film.

Entertainment Theology: New-Edge Spirituality in a Digital Democracy by Barry Taylor (BakerAcademic, 2008, $18.99) envisions Christianity's future as "spirituality over religion" and believes Christians must rethink the sacred in a democratized world.

Into the Dark: Seeing the Sacred in the Top Films of the 21st Century by Craig Detweiler (BakerAcademic, 2008, $18.99) examines 45 films that resonate theologically, offering groundbreaking insight into their scriptural connections and theological applications.

Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music by Jeremy S. Begbie (BakerAcademic, 2008, $22.99) examines the connections between music and theology by engaging Scripture, musical history and contemporary culture and exploring how God's truth sounds and how it might "re-sound" in the realm of music.

What Would Jesus Deconstruct? The Good News of Postmodernism for the Church by John D. Caputo (BakerAcademic, 2008, $19.99) helps readers understand deconstruction as the hermeneutics of the kingdom of God and provides a glimpse of what this might look like in the hands of Jesus as applied to the church.

Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions, edited by Michael J. Christensen and Jeffrey A. Wittung (BakerAcademic, 2008, $29.99) is a panoramic collection of studies on the theme of deification that will help deepen the understanding and appreciation of salvation as deification.

Mid-journey parenting

Michael A. King, Telford, Pa., is pastor, Spring Mount (Pa.) Mennonite Church; publisher, Cascadia Publishing House LLC; and editor, *DreamSeeker Magazine*.

It was the fifth time we had done this, share Denver as father and daughter. The spirits of the younger girl, going back all the way to the first trip when she was 13, hovered near, seeming almost as present as the married woman now plunging so quickly, to our mutual shock, toward age 30. This presence of my daughter as many different girls and women proved an opportunity to ponder the parenting journey.

I say ponder, not conquer. As a father now for nearly three decades, one thing I can see is that parenting involves an ever-shifting set of challenges and opportunities, not merely tasks to be mastered on the way to a parenting diploma. So I see more clearly than at the beginning how hard it is to glimpse what lies ahead.

But I did hope I was learning a few things as I visited with all five versions of my daughter, Kristy. Actually more than five, since I also could see many other versions, from the baby who dropped to the floor on Christmas morning (I had taught her to roll into my arms, but she only got the rolling part; her mother was not pleased) through the toddler who crawled across papers on my desk before computers were invented to the stage manager of her sisters (spied in home videos) who became a theater stage manager in college days.

Back then the task was to get my children safely to adulthood. After that, I vaguely expected, parents rest.

Among the things I learned were these:

Mark the journey. We didn't know at the start of our Denver saga what a way to mark the journey it would become. The first time came about because we thought she would enjoy accompanying me, a book editor, to a book convention. It was so much fun we did it again. Then we mixed in our family tradition of taking special parent-child trips at key junctures in their lives. Kristy asked me to take her back to Denver for her "18 trip." During that trip she hoped we'd return for her "21 trip." Then at 21 she wondered if we could still do it even if someday she got married. Six years later we did. And how we celebrated on the fifth trip the haunts and memories and life stages marked by the prior four!

Grasp that parenting stays intense. The most surprising learning is how intense parenting remains after children grow up. Maybe that feeling ebbs as children grow even older, but so far I don't see the signs. My heart still falls and leaps, sometimes even more intensely than it once did.

Back then the task was to get my children safely to adulthood. After that, I vaguely expected, parents rest. And in some ways we do. Diapers, ear infections, school, driving lessons, first crush and first crushed heart—all completed. Time for the hammock.

Except now it's questions such as, Will she marry? Who? How will it go? Can she handle grad school, part-time work, marriage and all that debt? Is her health insurance good enough? What do I do when she's hurting and I can't go with her like we used to for fast-food breakfast before school?

Cherish the gift. I did manage, even as the utterly imperfect father of young children I was, to celebrate reasonably often the gift my daughters were. Thank God I did, since we travel so quickly from the daughter selecting Misty out of the Norwegian Elkhound litter to the daughter earning a degree in environmental studies. Yet there can be more space to see our children as the artwork they are once they leave home. We're still implicated—seeing hints of ourselves for better or worse in the child before us. But our day-to-day responsibility has faded. And being with a child who lives far from home becomes a special occasion, no longer another routine along with toasting the bagel.

Now, instead of being almost within the painting that is our child's life, we can sit outside it, gaze at it, cherish it. Not because it's flawless. True art never is; the greatest art is riven with flaws and tragedy even as sun dapples leaves in crystalline air. But because it is what it is: our child, whom we love, in whom we are (to echo a Voice cherishing son Jesus) well-pleased.

We flew back to our separate coasts, Kristy and I. She was perfectly capable of doing this. But since I had sponsored the trip, I felt while I awaited confirmation of her safe arrival as if no time had passed at all: She had just been born, she was in my arms and it was my calling to keep her safe. This is mid-journey parenting: holding a baby while the woman flies away. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

New York Times Bestselling Author
Beverly Lewis
The Longing
A Novel
The Courtship of Nellie Fisher
· Book 3 ·
The Forbid
A Novel
Book 2
Parting
A Novel
Book 1

THE STIRRING CONCLUSION TO THE *NY TIMES* BESTSELLING SERIES FROM

BEVERLY LEWIS

With the community divided, Nellie Mae Fisher is at a crossroads—
and one decision could change her life forever.
Will she follow her heart or
stay true to her beloved Amish heritage?

THE COURTSHIP OF NELLIE FISHER

The Parting
The Forbidden
The Longing

BETHANYHOUSE

www.bethanyhouse.com

*************************************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 891 15-DEC-09
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY S32 P5
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Gordon Houser

'God is in control'

When we gather each Sunday to worship the Triune God, we proclaim that God is in charge, which means that we are not. In doing this we follow an early Anabaptist belief in self-surrender ("Gelassenheit"), offering ourselves in service to God.

The implications of such worship can get lost in the maze of issues we encounter. Then comes a witness that helps make it clear.

One evening at the Sept. 18-20 meetings of the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA (see page 19), we met with leaders from several Mennonite congregations in Philadelphia. Someone asked Tuyen Nguyen, pastor of the local Vietnamese Mennonite Church, to tell about an experience he had some 15 years earlier, when he wasn't a pastor but a member of that congregation.

During a worship service, he said, a man ran into the building, chased by another man, who carried a gun. Tuyen saw that the man being chased could not escape, so he stepped between him and the man with the gun. He did this without much thought, but his action grew out of his understanding that Jesus absorbed the violence of others in his own body, and we are to do the same.

The man with the gun stopped and pointed the gun at Tuyen a moment, then turned and left. Later he came back and talked to Tuyen. Some months later this man gave his life to Christ, was baptized and joined the congregation. The man he had chased that day was his father.

> **We can be peaceful because God is in control.**—Tuyen Nguyen

Tuyen told us, "We can be peaceful because God is in control." By control, it was clear, he did not mean that God controlled every movement each person made. Each actor was free to act as he chose—the chaser, the chasee and Tuyen, who chose to stand between them. He meant that we are not in charge; God is, and we do not have to make things come out right. We are instead to surrender ourselves to God's Spirit and in the way Jesus taught.

To be honest, we don't like that word control. And if it means that whatever happens is God's will, I don't like it either. I don't believe God gave Jeanne (my wife) cancer or caused her to be losing her eyesight. I don't believe God wills that 32,000 children die each day from hunger and preventable diseases.

I also have to admit that I don't have the power to fix those problems. I have abilities, and I need to be responsible to practice those in a way that glorifies God and shows love to all God's creation.

Do I do that best by acting frantically, as if the world's well-being depended on me? Or am I more faithful by practicing Gelassenheit, surrendering myself to God. Jesus exemplified this by emptying himself, "taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness" (Philippians 2:7).

Jesus shows us what it means to be human—and it doesn't mean being in control. It means giving oneself in love. And it may mean, as Pastor Tuyen said, absorbing the violence of others in our body. We can do this, he said, because God is in control. And God's control is not one of domination but of Self-giving love.

I spoke with Tuyen after the meeting, and he kept repeating this phrase. Rather than seeing that as a restriction on our freedom, he seemed to see it as a freeing notion. Seeing God, not ourselves, as in control frees us from fear, from the need to save ourselves. It helps us live in the reality that only God can save us—or anyone. Only God can bring ultimate good.

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) has adopted the slogan "Getting in the way," which is exactly what Pastor Tuyen did. His wasn't a well-thought-out strategy (not that those aren't useful). He responded out of an ingrained belief—call it intuition—that our lives, and our deaths, are in God's hands, not ours.

Whether or not we follow Ronald Sider's plea to expand CPT (page 8), we can learn from the example of its workers, who daily offer themselves—their bodies and their safety—in service to others. And we can offer ourselves to one another—to our friends, our neighbors, even our enemies—because God is in charge. At least, that's what we say when we worship.—*gh*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN
OCT 21 2008

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org
October 21, 2008

consumer desire

Page 8

11 Enough is enough
16 Not politics as usual
18 A dialogue toward peace with Iran
32 Be not (politically) conformed

When prayer doesn't work

Kenneth Thompson is pastor of Friendship Community Church, Bronx, N.Y.

In my spirituality I know there is no reason to believe prayer isn't heard. Yet in my humanity—and yours too—there are private, humbling moments where one wonders. I find comfort understanding that prayer, like life, even at its simplest, is still so intricate and interrelated. And faith, like peace, is a life journey, not just a destination. Jesus Christ reconciles the sincere idealism of our heavenly worship and the stark realism of our walk in this world into a pragmatic idealism brimming with joyful hope and faith each time we pray. True heart-faith decreases reservations by becoming increasingly persuaded of God's faithfulness, authority and ability in Jesus Christ.

"Why doesn't God answer my prayers? I pray for something and it ends up different or worse. Why would God let my life end up like this?" I heard those words during a worship service from someone who felt like an unattended soul. How do you explain to the depressed and angry why there are times it seems prayer doesn't work and God doesn't listen? Do we say, If you have faith you would trust and not have any questions? No. I understand now that asking God questions marks the sincerity of one's growing faith and will yield depth of character over time. It's the absence, not the presence, of questions that make one's faith shallow.

Martha and Mary in Luke's vivid account of Jesus' visit to their home yield some clues why and when prayer doesn't work. Martha welcomes Jesus in. Mary sits and listens. Martha, standing, goes to another room to do "important" things while Mary stays in his presence. Prayer doesn't work when we, like Martha, welcome Jesus into our lives yet find ourselves more active and conscious in another room rather than in his presence. I imagine Martha was close enough to recognize his voice but was still too far to hear his words. A Christian can be close enough to recognize God's voice yet can still be too far away and distracted to hear every living word proceeding from God's mouth. Protect your worship opportunity with God from falling among the other-things-to-do list. The mistake we make with Martha and the Bethlehem innkeeper years before is having Jesus on the property but off to the side, given no room or attention in our main activities.

Learn to prioritize and preserve your time with God. Overwhelmed? Master time stewardship, not time management. Management works to get more things done in a day; stewardship works to have more of the day left when you're done. Never risk advancing in work disciplines by sacrificing spiritual disciplines.

Martha returns, standing above Jesus and the submitted Mary. Martha interrupts Jesus, tells him to speak to her sister, whom she didn't speak to, the one whose company she felt Jesus preferred, into doing what she expected of her. Prayer doesn't work when our attitude isn't right, when fellowship with a brother or sister in the Lord is strained, when we do not forgive those who disappoint us and if we feel God is unfair. Mary heard what Martha did not, received what Martha could not and was favored when Martha was not. Mary wasn't a better person; she was in a better position because she made a better choice. Life is about choices. Jesus resisted Martha's summons and praised Mary's choice. God chooses any who consistently choose to "be still and know God."

Feeling overwhelmed that God has to call your attention more than once to get you to listen? God responds to your heart needs above your thoughts. God cares. God is a God of covenant relationship and earnest commitment. Prayer doesn't work if you mold it but won't let it mold you.

The Mennonite

Vol. 11, No. 20, October 21, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

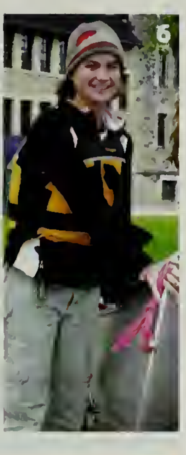
Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church USA

CONTENTS

AMBS LIBRARY ELKHART, IN OCT 2 1 2008

7


6

16

11

8 **Do you have pleonexia?**
Mennonites and consumer desire—*Valerie Weaver-Zercher*

11 **Enough is enough**
Living free of clutter—*Katie Funk Wiebe*

14 **Discovery learning**
Eastern Mennonite High School students go on the road to develop a land ethic.—*Myron E. Blosser*

15 **A contrarian view of anticonsumption rhetoric**
Let's not fall into the trap of neo-protectionism that excludes distant producers from our markets.—*Al Doerksen*

16 **Not politics as usual**
Our primary allegiance is to the way, the truth and the life of Jesus.—*Rod Stafford*

19 **Schrag announces plans for retirement**
Ron Byler, associate executive director, will also leave post in late 2009.—*Marathana Prothro*

20 **Congregations address 'divisive' politics**
Speakers model dialogue at Franklin Conference forum on politics on Sept. 7.—*Anna Groff*

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Grace and truth**
When prayer doesn't work—*Kenneth Thompson*

4 **Readers say**

6 **News digest**

18 **Leadership**
A dialogue toward peace with Iran—*Arli Klassen and J. Daryl Byler*

26 **For the record**

30 **Mediaculture**
How good fiction reflects God's perfect love—*Gordon Houser*

32 **Editorial**
Be not (politically) conformed—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: Stockxpert.com

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Figure out why people leave

"Remembering Our Baptism" by John D. Roth (Sept. 16) is a fine article that makes some excellent points. But I suspect that if you polled those 2,000 Denver ex-Mennonites and all the others I know in Washington and other urban areas, the lack of continuing baptismal education is not anywhere on their top 10 list of why they don't attend church or consider themselves Mennonite anymore. From my own experience, out of a group of about a dozen close friends from college—every single one a cradle Mennonite—less than half currently attend a Mennonite church or call ourselves practicing Mennonites. And out of those five or so that do identify as Mennonite, at least two spent some time not being Mennonite.

Why? Some don't believe anymore; some never believed and now don't have to fake it; some are gay and aren't feeling the love from the Mennonite church; some are miles from the lone Mennonite church in their city; some would rather spend Sunday mornings with their families; some don't want to deal with the baggage. And few of us reflect the current status quo of the Mennonite church member demographics and Mennonite Church USA member beliefs as outlined in Conrad Kanagy's study. I want Mennonite Church USA to do studies, surveys and polls on these people. I want *The Mennonite* to print their stories. I want to read occasional columns titled "Why I'm not Mennonite Anymore" or "Why I'm Still Mennonite But It's Touch and Go Sometimes" or "Why I'd Love to Be Mennonite Again if Only."

Mennonite Church USA can talk all it wants about being missional, but if we can't even seriously figure out why people leave, what's the point of all that fine talk? I don't think we are even curious. And that's not 2,000 Denver ex-Mennonites' loss. *—LeAnne Zook, Washington, D.C.*

IN THIS ISSUE

An article in *The Marketplace* sparked this issue's consumerism theme. We liked Al Doerksen's contrarian view (page 15) and reprinted the article. "Enjoy a cup of coffee, a bowl of raspberries, a banana or an orange that has traveled some distance," Doerksen writes, "knowing that producers, processors and transporters have as much right to work and to earn an income as we do." Then came Valerie Weaver-Zercher's reminder about the word "pleonexia" (the passion for more) in our cover story (page 8). "Small groups and house fellowships," Weaver-Zerhcer says, "are places where we can become honest and vulnerable about our desires." Breaking news is on page 19: James Schrag, executive director of Mennonite Church USA, will retire on Nov. 30, 2009.*—Editor*

Baptized too early?

Regarding the importance of baptism ("Remembering Our Baptism," Sept. 16): I've come to think that Mennonite churches may pressure youth to take this step too early. Many are only 12 or 13 when they are approached with this decision; at that age they may simply be doing what is expected of them. While we should certainly affirm Christian commitment during those years, young people should instead be presented with the opportunity in their later years of high school so they have the maturity to make the decision for themselves. This would allow them to have a deeper understanding of what it means to be a member of the body of Christ.*—Ann Fetters, Wichita, Kan.*

Retaining new believers

I support John D. Roth's call for ongoing catechism ("Remembering Our Baptism," Sept. 16). Several of us, including Howard Wagler of South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church, Don Patterson of Lower Deer Creek, Iowa, and Marion Bontrager of Hesston (Kan.) College have been working on a series of four classes that we and a growing number of churches have found helpful in discipling and retaining new believers. They are modifications of lessons, with a baseball diamond sequence, done by Rick Warren of Saddleback Community Church of Lake Forrest, Calif.

The first lessons help new believers to intelligently and passionately take the step of baptism and membership. After taking this step, the new members are invited to lessons that have to do with discovering spiritual maturity. These guide people in making commitments to a daily time with God, to proportionate giving and to joining a fellowship-accountability group. Lessons at third base help new members discover their gifts and passions and how these might be put to practical use in the local church. Lessons at home base help members articulate how they have experienced the grace of God and how they might share God's love with those who are outside the church.

This project is in process and needs the support and involvement of the wider church.*—Palmer Becker, Kitchener, Ont.*

Sunday school last bastion for Scriptures

I appreciate the Aug. 19 issue on Sunday school and Wilbert R. Shenk's helpful response (Readers Say, Sept. 16). For a number of years I have shared wherever I can about how biblically illiterate we have become.

I serve as campus pastor at a Mennonite middle school, and I am shocked that many kids don't know the Ten Commandments or the Lord's

Prayer. Our daughter and husband were helping with conference youth and gave a Bible quiz. They asked whether the Easter story is in the Old Testament or in the New Testament. Approximately half did not know. The head of a Bible department in one of our colleges said, "You wouldn't believe the difference in the students today and those 20 or more years ago. These students don't know the simplest Bible stories."

The Sunday school classes I've been in the past number of years are often a waste of time as far as teaching solid biblical truth. I told our congregational leadership we need teacher training for Sunday school teachers. Might the Sunday school be the last bastion for teaching the Scripture in our congregations? Solid Bible teaching can hardly be done in a 10- to 20-minute sermon.—*John M. Drescher, Quakertown, Pa.*

Disappointed by Mennonite Central Committee

I was profoundly disappointed to read that Arli Klassen, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee, attended a peacemaking dialogue evening in New York that included Iran's President Ahmadinejad. I was outright shocked to have read further that MCC would cosponsor an event with the World Council of Churches. What a contradiction of terms; peacemaking and Ahmadinejad in the same sentence. Read his lips. Ahmadinejad advocates the annihilation of Israel, denies the Holocaust and supports terrorism. He has no intent to genuinely promote peacemaking outside of the scope of his terms. It would be naive to believe otherwise. To attend any event with Ahmadinejad legitimizes his position from his perspective.—*Seth Ramer, Grantsville, Md.*

MCC responds

Mennonite Central Committee was one of five cosponsors of a Sept. 25 peacemaking dialogue and dinner that included President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran. Genuine dialogue includes listening and frankly stating important areas of concern and disagreement. MCC engaged in both components. We believe that Jesus set an example of meeting with reviled officials and those defined as enemies in his time, and he calls us to reach out with compassion and positive action to all (Mark 2:15-17 and Luke 6:27-36).

We hope and trust that the event will bear fruit in making space for religious and political dialogue with Iran and in witnessing to Christ's call to love our neighbors. For a more thorough reflection about the event go to http://mcc.org/iran2008. —*Arli Klassen, MCC executive director*

Editor's note: For a fuller response from Mennonite Central Committee leaders Arli Klassen and J. Daryl Byler, see the "Leadership" column on page 18.

Regrets closing of CMLC

I am saddened to learn of the closing of the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center. I am also saddened to learn that there was no quilt auction held in Elmhurst, Ill., this year. This annual event was always looked forward to with great anticipation. I emailed a note requesting the dates and also tried to phone, but there was a message that the number is no longer in service.

This letter is meant to congratulate and thank the Mennonite church for its years of service and assistance to the Chicago area. It is my hope that you will continue to do your good work as your mission goes forth.—*Margaret Zwadlo, Chicago*

Election season policy

Effective with this issue, we will observe the following policy for letters that pertain to the U.S. presidential election: Readers Say submissions that are in response to other letter-writers will not be published. We also ask that letter-writers offer positive comments about the party or candidate of their choice and refrain from making negative statements about the party or candidate that is not their choice.—*Editor*

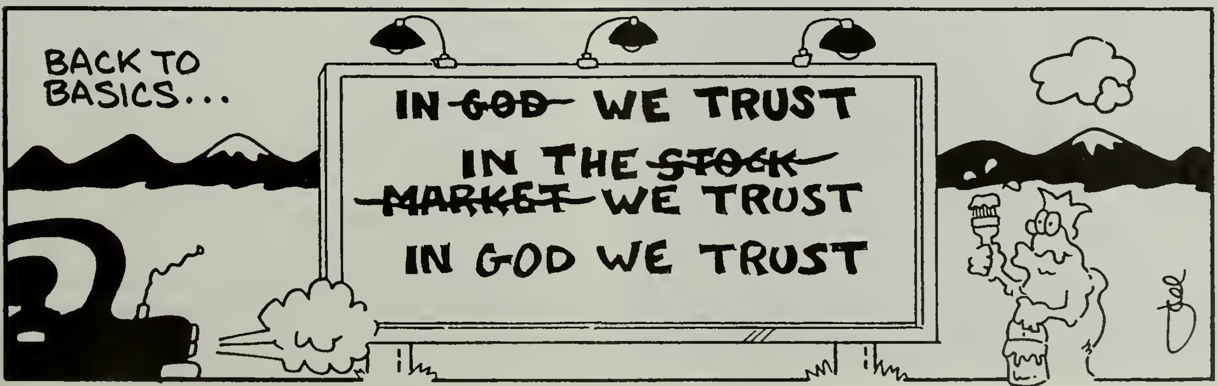
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

My congregation talks about consumerism: (56 votes as of Oct. 15)

- ○ Regularly (48%)
- ○ Occasionally (45%)
- ○ Never (7%)
- ○ Not sure (0%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**



IN BRIEF

Goshen recognizes four alumni

Goshen (Ind.) College awarded four outstanding alumni the Culture for Service award during homecoming Oct. 3-5. Dale Kempf '78 and his colleagues invented some of the most potent antiviral drugs in the world at Abbott Laboratories. Jim '65 and Virginia Mininger '65 worked in the the former Soviet Union—modern day Lithuania—at LCC International University (formerly Lithuania Christian College) from 1995 to July of this year. Paul Myers '66 was the CEO of Ten Thousand Villages for 16 years beginning in 1989.—*Goshen College*

Bluffton awards alumni, faculty

On Oct. 3, Bluffton (Ohio) University granted the following awards: The Lifetime Service Award went to Dr. Dennis '50 and Dorothy (Salzman) '50 Epp. Dr. Epp retired after 35 years of family practice to work overseas. The Professional Achievement Award went to Greg Wannemacher '77, who expanded a trucking operation into warehousing and packaging. The Outstanding Young Alumni Award went to Christina Sherry '04, who is completing a Ph.D./registered dietitian program and has published three articles. The Faculty/Staff Service Award went to Linda (Falk) Suter.—*Bluffton University*

MMA strong and stable despite economy

GOSHEN, Ind.—The financial markets have experienced significant turmoil and losses. The question on the minds of many Mennonite Mutual Aid members is what all this means for them and for MMA—particularly since their retirement savings and investment accounts may have been losing value this year before this most recent Wall Street streak of problems.

"MMA, like all investment managers, has exposure to several of the names in the recent headlines, through direct ownership of securities, via direct and indirect business relationships and through major shifts in the financial system," said Chad Horning, MMA chief investment officer, on Sept. 18. "In general, our exposure to the securities has been modest, since one of the hallmarks of MMA and its subadvisors' styles has been to create diversified portfolios."

With big-name banks and insurance companies in trouble, MMA released a statement on Sept. 30 saying that it is still strong and stable.

"As stewards of your funds, we assure you MMA remains financially sound and strong," said Larry Miller, MMA president. "We have surpluses well above our reserves. Our investment managers and financial management staff are closely monitoring the financial industry situation to safeguard MMA and our members."

"We've had investment losses during the third quarter like many investors," said Chad Horning, chief investment officer. "No one really knows what the effect of this current market turbulence will be or how long it will last. But we've fortunately had very diversified investments, and we are concentrating on being prudent as we manage our way through this crisis within the financial services and insurance industry."

"MMA has reserves above the requirements established by insurance regulators and an additional significant surplus," added Mel Claassen, chief financial officer at MMA. "Our reserves are there for our members who depend on our financial stability to fund health insurance claims, life insurance claims and annuity payments."—*MMA*

John Longhurst

Canadian Mennonite University students canoe

Melanie Duckworth and Corinne Klassen, students at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Man., prepare to portage during a local conservation challenge on Sept. 25.—*CMU*

Mennonite Men present grant to Ohio church

BELLEFONTAINE, Ohio—On Sept. 28, Mennonite Men representatives Lyle Troyer, from Ohio Conference, and Joe Graber, Mennonite Men board member, presented a $35,000 Join Hands grant to Jubilee Mennonite Church, Bellefontaine. Sunday school participants viewed the Join Hands DVD "Places of Welcome," followed by a question-and-answer session.

This session made the following points: the congregation appreciates the money to help with their building fund, the grant will help the church continue with installing commercial grade equipment to complete the kitchen, the grant creates a feeling of unity and acceptance with the greater Mennonite church, and having a building dedicated to this congregation creates a sense of permanence within the community.—*Mennonite Men*

K'ekchi' Mennonites say goodbye to leader

CARCHA, Guatemala—Before K'ekchi' leader Mateo Pop Coc died last May, his spiritual father, Larry Lehman, paid him a surprise visit.

Lehman, a former Eastern Mennonite Missions missionary to Guatemala and current EMM board member, was leading a short-term mission trip to Guatemala last April when he learned of Coc's serious illness. Together they reminisced about the years Lehman had made weekly trips to the remote mountain region of Chirucbequim.

For the past five years Lehman has returned to Guatemala each February to teach leadership courses in K'ekchi'. He is currently preparing a course on Anabaptist history and theology to teach in 2009.

He says that evangelical church growth throughout Guatemala has been very rapid in the past two decades. The K'ekchi' Mennonite Church now numbers 10,500 members in 114 congregations.—*EMM*

Jim Bishop

rginia Mennonite Relief Sale raises $307,638

ura Bomberger of Harrisonburg, Va., moves freshly made nuts from the glazing process to be placed in boxes for sale ring the Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale at the Rockingham unty Fairgrounds Oct. 3-4.—*Jim Bishop*

Former Bethel president Voth dies at 84

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Orville L. Voth, the eighth president of Bethel College, North Newton, died Sept. 22 in Wichita, Kan., following a stroke. He was 84.

Orville L. Voth

Voth began his teaching career at Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina. He served as interim academic dean at Bethel College and then as president from 1967-71 before returning to Kansas Wesleyan as vice president of academic affairs. He ended his career as director of independent study at the University of Kansas.

James Juhnke, professor of history during Voth's tenure at Bethel, recalls that on Nov. 11, 1966, when Voth was academic dean, he joined the "Repentance Walk" from the campus to the North Newton post office, an early protest against the Vietnam War organized by the college Peace Club.

"That event divided the campus," Juhnke says. "It was especially dramatic for a top administrator to participate because President Vernon Neufeld had been critical of the plans for the Repentance Walk. I took it as an expression of Orville's commitment to the Mennonite peace witness."

In addition to his wife, Helen, Voth is survived by four daughters, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Voth was a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church.—*Bethel College*

Taiwan group celebrates 60 years of medicine

HUALIEN, Taiwan—Taiwan believers and former mission workers celebrated the 60th anniversary of Mennonite medical ministry in Taiwan on Sept. 19 at the Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien.

A 35-bed hospital built in Hualien in 1954 under the leadership of Dr. Roland Brown has evolved into a 500-bed regional teaching hospital with more than 900 employees. The Taiwan medical work by Mennonites began in 1948, when Mennonite Central Committee sent workers from Kaifeng, China, at the invitation of the Taiwan Presbyterian Church. Mobile clinics, eye clinics and distribution of relief goods were carried out around the island among the aboriginal groups, most of who lived in the mountainous areas. By 1956, MCC transferred the medical ministry to the Board of Missions of the General Conference Mennonite Church, a predecessor agency of Mennonite Mission Network and Mennonite Church Canada Witness.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

EMU holds 'forgiveness' symposium

HARRISONBURG, Va.—On Oct. 10, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, held a symposium on "forgiveness" with a focus on understanding the Amish response to the schoolhouse shooting on Oct. 2, 2006.

Two Lancaster area men who spoke on behalf of the Amish community in the aftermath of the tragedy and fielded hundreds of media queries spoke and took questions. Donald B. Kraybill, professor at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, and Herman Bontrager, president/CEO of Goodville Mutual Casualty Company, reflected on Amish beliefs and practice that prompted them to forgive, show compassion and respond graciously, despite their deep pain.—*EMU*

Couple donates $1 million for CMU library

WINNIPEG, Man.—John and Katie Penner of Calgary donated $1 million to Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, to buy books and other resources.

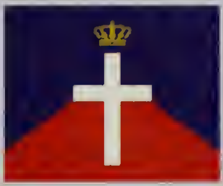
At a Sept. 26 ceremony, John Penner recalled being told in the 1960s by a professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, one of CMU's predecessor colleges, that "it would be nice to have more money to buy more books for the library."

"It may have taken me a while [to make the donation], but I have a good memory," Penner said. "Our prayer and wish is that this gift will be of benefit to faculty and students at CMU."—*CMU*

—compiled by Anna Groff

IN BRIEF

Kingdom of God flag introduced



Scott Smith, a member of Greensboro (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship, introduced this Kingdom of God flag at the Virginia Mennonite Conference Assembly in July. The flag "represents the worldwide body of Christ with an agenda of reconciling the world to God by transforming lives through self-sacrificial service." Read more at www.kingdomofgod-flag.info.

Violent images sensationalized by Canadian press

In August, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener, Ont., was the location for a training video production by the Canadian Distance Education Institute to help teachers respond appropriately in the case of a violent intrusion on a high school campus. A photo of SWAT team members at the school in full gear and carrying assault rifles—and a student (portraying a victim of school violence)—was plastered across the local paper's pages. Principal Terry Schellenberg says, "I felt very uncomfortable with what I deemed to be the narrow and sensationalist press that emerged from the rehearsal. It did not reflect the holistic sense of how I see this initiative in its broader scope."—*Canadian Mennonite* (Oct. 13)

CLICK TO GET UP TO
70% OFF
ON 100s OF BRAND NAME DESIGNERS
AND
GET IT
NOW

Photo illustration: Dee Birkey

Mennonites don't talk much about consumer desire. Some of us are good at consuming, and others are just as adept at critiquing such consumption. Many Mennonites—and this includes me—are some combination of both: blithely going about the business of trying to acquire more stuff even as we criticize everyone else for doing the same thing. As sociologist Juliet Schor found in one of her studies of U.S. consumption, 78 percent of respondents considered most North Americans to be "very materialistic," but only 8 percent identified themselves as such.

Yet in both cases—whether we're judging other people for their expensive new gadget or figuring out how to buy one ourselves—we are less adept at admitting to the visceral nature of our desires for more and to the ways such desires might form or warp our faith. Indeed, both mindless consumption and self-righteous judgmentalism can function as distractions from the more hidden urges that cause us to buy—or judge—in the first place. Yet if Christ dwells within us, then it is those deep-seated desires to which God attends and which God can redeem.

Do you have pleonexia?

Mennonites and consumer desire

by Valerie Weaver-Zercher

Desire: individual sin or corporate condition? It's tempting to quickly label all consumer desire as sin. Certainly there are countless biblical injunctions against this kind of desire. The 10th commandment tells us not to covet anything that belongs to our neighbor (although it may help to update the servant, ox and donkey listed in Exodus to the Blackberry, new bedroom suite and Prius). Christ spoke against storing up treasures on earth, reminding his listeners that their security and hope lies in him, not in bigger barns. Religious ethicist John Haughey resurrects a Greek word, "pleonexia," to describe what we know as greed, avarice or covetousness. Pleonexia can be described as "a passion for more," Haughey writes in *Virtue and Affluence: The Challenge of Wealth*, "an insatiability for more of what I already experience or have." He says that Christ's words in Luke 12:15, "Be on your guard against all kinds of greed," can also be translated, "Avoid pleonexia in all its forms."

Yet while it is important to repent of our greed and to ask God to replace our acquisitive cravings with desire for the Spirit, there are several problems with labeling consumer desire only as individual sin. One is that is makes way for convenient self-righteousness, especially for those of us in the middle and upper classes. It's easy for those of us who have achieved a certain level of comfort—including many North American Mennonites—to call all desire "greed" and to bemoan the ways it prompts people living paycheck to paycheck to go into debt in order to buy large-screen TVs and daily lattes. Too often, at least in my life, a "more-with-less" ethos is possible only because of class privilege, and too often it becomes a stance of judgment rather than a stance of grace: I could buy it if I wanted it, but I don't—and you shouldn't either.

Labeling all consumer desire sin may also move it to a more subterranean level where we're less willing to talk about it, less able to examine it and less equipped to figure out how it works. We may be tempted to cordon off our desires from our buying habits; if we see desire as sin, it becomes easier to convince ourselves that we weren't acting out of insatiable desire when we bought the new living room furniture or redid the bathroom and that the planning and saving and shopping didn't actually take up a significant portion of our thought life. Indeed, even as North American Christians own more and more stuff, we may be less willing than others to own the desires that led to their purchase.

Both mindless consumption and self-righteous judgmentalism can function as distractions from the more hidden urges that cause us to buy—or judge—in the first place.

It's also important to realize the ways pleonexia goes beyond the borders of the individual heart. Greed and avarice work within the dim reaches of our interior selves, but if they were confined to those spaces they would not carry so much power. Consumer capitalism requires us to be a nation of "pleonexics"; only by cultivating pleonexia in large numbers of people has it survived so long. "We have enough stuff; most Americans have more than enough," writes Judith Levine in *Not Buying It: My Year Without Shopping*. "Yet capitalism needs us to want what we do not have, and desire for what we do not have is an infinitely renewable resource." Indeed, it is only through the corporate nature of pleonexia, the underwriting of consumer desire by our entire economic system, that we can have arrived at the absurd position where, as Schor writes, "half the population of the richest country in the world say they cannot afford everything they really need. And it's not just the poorer half."

Seeing greed as both individual sin and corporate condition may help us move beyond that standoff between unconscious acquisitiveness and haughty judgment. Pleonexia, that insatiable desire for more and more stuff, cannot be seen as only his problem or her problem or even my problem; it's

Continued on page 10

Seeing greed as both individual sin and corporate condition may help us move beyond that standoff between unconscious acquisitiveness and haughty judgment.

Continued from page 9

our problem.

Discussing desire. Intentionally considering the ways consumer desire forms us best occurs in the context of community. Realizing that we're not alone in our appetites for more—that we're not the only ones looking greedily at our neighbor's oxen and donkeys—might help us move out of the cycle of self-blame and self-righteousness that spirals into paralysis. It is in naming our desires that they begin to lose power over us. We hope small groups and house fellowships are places where we can become honest and vulnerable about our desires and be strengthened to find ways to redeem them.

These honest self-assessments will probably require that we be able to laugh at ourselves. My husband and I are slowly learning to find humor in our seemingly endless ratcheting up of expectations for more things, more house, more money. After visiting friends or acquaintances with particularly nice homes or furniture or cars or gadgets, we've taken to quizzing each other on the trip home about which items we particularly coveted, often chuckling at our predispositions to certain types of consumer envy. While initially it can be painful to recognize the insatiability of our desires, there's also freedom in diagnosing our own pleonexia, liberation in finding out that others have it, too.

Redeeming desire. In addition to talking about our pleonexia with others, we may be able to find ways to harness our desires rather than simply repudiating them. Instead of denying we have any consumer desire, perhaps there is a way to sift through our desires, examine them for what they are and figure out what deeper messages they hold.

As sensory creatures, we exist in the material world and perceive value and goodness through the objects and substance of our habitation. We experience the spiritual and the intangible through the physical and make sense of our world through the things that surround us. Rather than berate ourselves for desiring the beautiful countertop or the sleek luxury car, perhaps we can ask ourselves what those objects represent to us, what deeper qualities they mediate for us. Does the designer purse stand in for something else we crave, such as belonging? Does the new car signify escape, which we can never seem to find? Does the expensive spa treatment symbolize rest, something we keep hoping we'll catch up with on the weekend? Only when we are aware of the cravings behind our consumption can we learn to look in places more likely to provide their fulfillment—such as church community, the natural world or worship—than things that moth and rust destroy. Each time we consciously name our desires, we are given the opportunity to detach from our cravings and offer our wants to God. Spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting and meditation may help us identify our hungers and then more accurately trace them to their roots.

This idea—attempting to redeem rather than repudiate our consumer desires—should not be seen as waving off a weighty issue. Indeed, it is incumbent on those of us in the United States, Europe and Japan—who make up 18 percent of the world's population and who consume 80 percent of its natural resources—to honestly assess where our pleonexia is leading the planet. Perhaps within our communities of faith we will be able to find the right balance between urgency and hope, between buying what we need and detaching from what we crave. Hopefully as we talk together about the seeming insatiability of our consumer desires, we will be led into a deeper awareness of the Source for which we truly yearn.

Valerie Weaver-Zercher is a writer and editor in Mechanicsburg, Pa. She is part of an Anabaptist house fellowship and the mother of three young sons.

Each time we consciously name our desires, we are given the opportunity to detach from our cravings and offer our wants to God.

Discussion questions

Beyond the media, who or what influences my desires and choices about purchases?

What is it about a particular item that draws me to it? How else might that desire be satisfied?

What value might it add to my life or to the life of others? What might it take away from me, others or the planet?

How much of my time and energy will be required to acquire it or maintain it?

How does this item support or detract from my calling?—*Anne Kaufman Weaver*

Enough is enough

Living free of clutter

I learned from Jeff Smith, the Frugal Gourmet of TV fame, that "frugal" doesn't mean cutting back or using only lower-cost ingredients. It means the wise use of resources and avoiding excesses. Don't use a cup of butter when a half cup will do. But use butter if the recipe calls for it.

He conveyed the view that frugality is not living as cheaply as possible and hoarding the excess. It doesn't mean skimping and saving, cutting back, to have something to leave the children. It doesn't mean putting everything on our plate at a buffet line to get two meals for one price.

Continued on page 12

by Katie Funk Wiebe

Living frugally means releasing ourselves from our love affair with the clutter in our lives that keeps us from serving God wholeheartedly.

Continued from page 11

Frugality is not asceticism or self-denial for the sake of self-denial. In New Testament times, the Pharisees fasted but let others know it. It is not living simply to be commended for living more simply than most to be considered holier.

Frugality does not stem from the belief that riches are evil, money is dirty and dehumanizing, and poverty is the great good. The love of money is the root of all evil. This hunger for money can be as strong in a poor person as in a rich person.

Living frugally means releasing ourselves from our love affair with the clutter in our lives that keeps us from serving God wholeheartedly. Imagine yourself as a swimmer moving upstream, fully clothed and dragging along your household. People with clutter get caught in seaweed and other obstacles.

The frugal Christian is one whose outward lifestyle is built on the inner reality of being a child of the kingdom and who has heard Jesus say, "Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33).

When we let go of clutter, we open up space in our lives for something new to happen.

Let's talk about clutter, all kinds, although it usually starts with things.

We program children early to believe that boredom and discomfort can be relieved by something external—a McDonald's Happy Meal gadget, a new sticker book, a new toy. Adults have the same approach to life: Discomfort can be relieved by a new recreational toy or house gadget. Garage sales are a visible attempt to get rid of clutter.

We older adults cling to our clutter as if it means our salvation. We're convinced a moving van will accompany the hearse to the cemetery. We buy souvenirs and take pictures when we travel to later store in overfilled closets for children to get rid of after our death.

How necessary is noise clutter to you? What is the first thing you do in the morning? What is the first thing to be upgraded in your home? CD player, cell phone, stereo, car radio? What sustains you? Live a week without noise clutter to find out.

We are assaulted daily by the clutter of sound from TVs, radios, DVDs, cell phones and loud, throbbing beats from the car alongside us at the intersection. Joggers wear iPods. There has to be background noise of some kind when we wait by the phone, when shopping, painting the house or vacuuming. Living with our own thoughts uncluttered by noise seems impossible.

Then there is the clutter of meaningless activity that fills time but not life. Lonely? Go to the mall, buy a DVD or a new pair of shoes, knock the tires on a new car. Bored? Check out the frig, buy a magazine, surf the Net. Dissatisfied? Eat a snack. Buy a new lipstick color, take a trip.

None of these activities is wrong in itself, but the pursuit of them trains us to believe that to find fulfillment and meaning requires spending money or being a consumer.

Add to this the clutter of motives or the lack of a main principle to guide our decision-making. In church we accept any teaching if the presenter is lively, enthusiastic and amusing. We develop a "coffee break" theology, believing what everyone else believes, especially people with strong opinions. We live comfortably with a double-mindedness—against abortion but for war, for abortion but against capital punishment, against homosexuality but OK with divorce and remarriage.

Beware of clutter. When we let go of clutter, we open up space in our lives for something new to happen. Consider these few principles of the uncluttered life that make that new thing possible.

The law of the manna jar or, enough is enough. In the wilderness, the Israelites grumbled about food. Slavery in Egypt looked great compared with their current existence. Were they going to die here in the desert? They complained to Moses, "Why did you bring us here?" They wanted to return to the leeks and garlics of Egypt. God answered by feeding them daily manna and quail.

Years later, Nehemiah talked to God in Babylon about that time: "You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. For 40 years you sustained them in the desert; they lacked nothing."

Nothing? C'mon. They were living a stripped-down life. Yes, they never had to decide what to make for dinner or which suit to wear to tabernacle worship. But they were wandering in the wilderness. We think of any wilderness experience as a place of deprivation, as tough times. For the Israelites the wilderness was a place of sufficiency, of enoughness and of economic equality because God provided. No one lacked enough food to eat. Enough was enough.

Years ago, during a difficult time when my husband was seriously ill and we were without income, friends brought us boxes of canned peaches and tomatoes, plentiful in Ontario at the time. We ate peaches for breakfast, lunch and dinner. We ate tomatoes, drank tomato juice and stewed them with everything as if the tomato was the only food in the world. I was tired of our manna of peaches and tomatoes. Yet in that desperate time in our family life, there was enough because God's presence was with us. Enough was enough.

The law of carefree living, freed from anxiety and burdens. Many burdens are related to clutter. We face possession overload. A student told me that the night before the big trip was to begin, her high school tour leader had each student wear the clothing they planned to wear the first day and walk about a mile carrying all their luggage. The next day each person's luggage got remarkably lighter. Fancy shoes were exchanged for more comfortable ones. Unfortunately we don't get a trial run in life. To be overburdened by the clutter of things, noise and motives is to be spiritually endangered.

Our culture invites, encourages and scares us into a life burdened with things to make us seem safe and comfortable. While on a Mennonite Central Committee learning tour in Central America, we toured a wealthy section of a huge city with many poor people. Wealthy homes were surrounded by sturdy stone fences on top of which had been erected a metal fence topped by barbed wire. Few thieves bother with an old model car. The simpler life ensures peace of mind.

The law of covenant community. God told the Israelites to stay away from the Canaanites in the new land, to remain a separate people. Former missionary John Driver writes about Christians being "God's contrast society." We're different. We have a different lifestyle because we have a different purpose in life. We are a people, the body of Christ, not just a group of individuals, each enjoying our private faith.

The uncluttered life has to do with how we fit people into our lives. I recall being a guest in a home where all chairs were placed so they faced a behemoth TV set. As guests we were obviously an obstacle to the host watching a football game and indifferently trying to keep conversation going.

In another home, the man of the house watched TV with a radio nestled in his lap to catch two games at the same time. At dinner he brought the radio to his end of the table while he caught the TV game out of the corner of his eye. I felt like an intruder.

Clutter diminishes the value of relationships. Clutter substitutes for people. Clutter encourages us to live apart from the covenant community and spend time and energy on our things. Clutter encourages us to lose sight of the dream of shalom, a harmonious caring community. A simpler life frees our schedules to invite people into our lives.

The law of justice for the dispossessed, the poor, stranger, widows and Levites. Quaker John Woolman saw the roots of slavery in the desire to have more of this world's goods, so he set himself against ownership of one human being by another. That meant setting himself against those who supported slavery. The frugal Christian is concerned with putting justice for people above property.

Our culture invites, encourages and scares us into a life burdened with things to make us seem safe and comfortable.

How can we fight clutter? John V. Taylor in *Enough Is Enough* suggests Christians start a joyful resistance movement against everything that militates against the simple life. But to avoid being too serious about it and pushing a load of guilt on others. He recommends three slogans as part of our daily offensive ritual against clutter:

Every time you watch TV with the children and a commercial comes on, holler together: "You've got to be kidding."

When you are tempted to buy something, tell yourself: "The price tag is too high, not just in terms of my budget but also the environment and what it will take to maintain it."

When you are about to add to the clutter, remind yourself: "I can't take it with me."

The prophet Isaiah said it simply, "Why spend money for what is not bread?"

Yes, why?

Katie Funk Wiebe is a Mennonite author who lives in Hillsboro, Kan.

Discovery learning

Eastern Mennonite High School students go on the road to develop a land ethic.

by Myron E. Blosser

Photographer: Lars Akers

When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.—Aldo Leopold

With this quote from environmentalist Aldo Leopold inscribed on their T-shirts, 29 students and five faculty members from Eastern Mennonite High School in Harrisonburg, Va., headed westward on July 9, 2007, in our quest to create a land ethic. After traveling 22 days and nearly 8,000 miles through 22 states and nine National Parks and Monuments, we returned, tired but transformed.

In formal education, teachers inundate students with a deluge of information while trapped within the boundaries of our classrooms. True education involves educating beyond these cinderblock confines and exposing students to authentic questions in actual environments so they can find real answers. Discovery 2007: Creating a Land Ethic utilized the entire nation as our classroom, relying on a diverse collection of experiential learning strategies and experts with various perspectives to enhance dialogue about environmental issues that affect our world.

Adopting its theme from the works of Aldo Leopold, viewed by many as the father of our current environmental movement, the Discovery group explored issues in many areas, including agriculture, water, urban environments, deserts, salmon and rivers, and megafauna management. We explored multiple perspectives on each issue through inquiry, experiences and guest speakers. This type of education—known as dissonance learning—demonstrated the complexity of environmental issues as students heard divergent, often conflicting, points of view from experts on various topics, summarized these views and formulated their own convictions about them.

For example, one issue we studied was the controversy concerning wild bison herds in the West. We heard from a rancher who needed to protect his cattle from infections spread by bison. Next, members of an environmental group shared their passion to return the West to its natural state, letting the bison roam free. Finally, a park ranger explained the need to protect yet manage the bison herds in Yellowstone National Park. Students learned the facets of issues, summarized their conclusions in essays and PowerPoint presentations and posted these on their Web page while traveling in a motor coach customized for the trip with lab spaces and laptops.

Discovery 2007: Creating a land ethic is one way Eastern Mennonite School is generating excitement in education. For more information, check out our Web site: emhsdiscovery.com.

While our group wrestled with environmental issues, we also learned how to live in community along the way. We camped in tents and prepared our own meals from supplies kept in the "discovery trailer," which was outfitted with solar panels to provide energy for a refrigerator as well as additional power during the evenings. We shared not only our meals but the stars with one another.

On the way home, we visited the Aldo Leopold Foundation in Baraboo, Wis. Seeing the famous Leopold shack in Wisconsin and walking where he walked helped us connect with his vision for developing a land ethic.

Finally, we visited the Goshen (Ind.) College's Merry Lea Environmental Center. Professors Luke Gascho and Ryan Sensenig helped us reflect on the previous 22 days and realize how developing a land ethic is a spiritual matter. "We need to go beyond sustainability and move into regeneration and transformation," said Gascho as he urged us to care for God's creation as part of living our faith.

As our motor coach rumbled into the school parking lot after our journey, we realized that not only had we had journeyed many miles, we had also progressed in our perspective. One student commented: "We can all make a difference if we make an effort. The effort will trigger others to change their way of life, having a positive effect. And if God told us to care for the world, why can't we? We don't want to be held responsible for damaging the world for other generations."

Myron E. Blosser teaches at Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg, Va.

A contrarian view of anticonsumption rhetoric

by Al Doerksen

I dread the anticonsumption rhetoric that becomes especially shrill at Christmas. Here is my argument for consumption mixed with a measure of thought and intelligence.

1. Don't fall into the trap of anticonsumerism. How many people would you like to disemploy by failing to engage in trade and commerce? Just because we mostly do not pursue jobs in manufacturing does not mean the millions who still work in manufacturing should not be entitled to work.

2. Live broader than the confines of the 100-mile diet. Remember that we live in a global community in which we trade and work in our areas of comparative advantage. It is good to support local producers, but do not fall into the trap of neo protectionism that excludes distant producers from our markets. Enjoy a cup of coffee, a bowl of raspberries, a banana or an orange that has traveled some distance, knowing that producers, processors and transporters have as much right to work and to earn an income as we do.

3. Fair trade is a good thing but only works if people consume. Middlemen play a useful purpose in the value chain that connects producers to markets. Fair trade works to ensure that those portions of the value chain that have the least economic power are also treated fairly. Buying fair trade coffee or cocoa or clothing is useful, but insist on comparable quality and that large sourcers from developing countries employ fair labor practices. How? Write a letter.

4. Buy something local but also buy something from China or India or some other developing economy. We need to act as though we live in a global community, and we need to celebrate the increasing prosperity in Mexico, China and India thanks to globalization.

5. Buy something extravagant like an original work of art or a handmade carpet. Often the producers of these are hardworking and receive a relatively low net hourly wage, yet they are people of unusual skill, creativity and insight. Our world needs such influences if we want to be more than mere material consumers of daily needs.

6. Happily pay higher prices for organic food. Organic foods are healthier for you but are more expensive to grow, and those who produce them require a fair return on their efforts to stay in business. Increasing demand will incentify the drive to find greater efficiencies in organic food production. At the same time, recognize that organic foods are a luxury that only the rich world can afford; most people live on what they can get.

7. Pay above the market for something. Once I had my shoes shined by a shoeshine wallah in India. The going rate is five rupees (about 12 cents); he asked for 10 rupees. I gave him 50 rupees and walked away. It cost me a dollar to surprise him, interfere usefully in the local market and shorten the number of hours he had to work to feed himself and his family. There are other ways to "overpay." A large tip (say 20 percent) for good service would be a nice surprise. Purchasing from a small, independent retailer as opposed to a lower-priced big box store might be a good thing.

8. Celebrate rising energy prices. It will encourage you to buy something energy-saving. Higher energy costs contribute the greatest incentive to reduce the use of existing energy resources and to research energy savings technologies.

9. Buy some new piece of technology. Digital film cameras are less expensive to operate and are easier on the environment than conventional film cameras. Cell phones have democratized information for millions of poor people in developing economies, such as India or China. IPods use a fraction of the energy of previous music machines. Buying technology rewards the innovators and inventors of this world. We need them.

10. Pay more for quality. Cheapest is not always the best value. Higher quality items frequently last longer and often have a lower cost per use. They take longer to hit the landfill sites. Buying quality encourages good engineering and careful craftsmanship.

11. When buying, look for items that contain a maximum of recyclable materials. Pay more for containers or packaging that can be reused or recycled. In general, leave plastic bags and other unnecessary packaging material at the store. Bring your own reusable bags to the store.

12. Boycott boycotts. The economic boycott of Cuba hasn't worked. Proposed boycotts of Myanmar (Burma) and Iran are not only politically ineffective, they mostly only punish the poor. In a boycotted economy, the rich and powerful are inconvenienced perhaps, but they will continue to eat. It is people at the bottom end of the ladder that pay the price. If you have to boycott something, let it be the trade in small arms.

Let's not fall into the trap of neo-protectionism that excludes distant producers from our markets.

Correction: The top photo on page 15 in the Oct. 7 issue was taken by Martha Morgan.

Al Doerksen is president of International Development Enterprises Canada. This is reprinted from The Marketplace.

Not politics as usual

by Rod Stafford

In Oregon we vote by mail. A couple of weeks before the election, we receive our ballots and a big, thick "Election Guide" to help us make rational, informed decisions. In the weeks before an election we can also look forward to political attack ads, self-serving TV commercials and probably a little fear-mongering to boot. And if that's not enough, there will be the ongoing stories in the media about lobbying scandals and congressional misconduct. In other words, politics as usual.

Jesus lived with the same thing (though he probably never heard of "Swift Boating"). On the way to Jerusalem, the seat of power, two of his closest aides, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him and said: "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you. … Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory" (Mark 10:35, 37).

Like well-connected insiders, they had been with Jesus from the start and had supported him in all the outlying precincts. Now they wanted a seat at the table. That's how it works. They had seen his rising star. They knew his ability to work the crowds and his knack for creating something from nothing. They were betting on a winner. He was going to the top, and they wanted to be right there with him—throwing out the Romans and setting up a new administration. Things would be different this time.

Jesus went to Jerusalem knowing what he was walking into. He was the ultimate political realist.

Naturally, the other 10 disciples were upset. Not because James and John had fundamentally misunderstood what Jesus meant but because they had made a Machiavellian power-grab, and the others were afraid of being left out. All of them believed the new world Jesus was talking about would be just like the old, only with better people in power.

But that is just more politics as usual. Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking" (Mark 10.38). It is not just that they finished the sentence wrong ("when we are in charge … we'll reform programs, institute better policies, set right priorities"); the whole sentence is wrong. The notion that we are in charge is wrong.

Jesus said to them—and says to us still—that we are not in charge. In God's kingdom, God is in charge and has a different, even odd, way of doing things. God created the world and watched us run off our own way, set up our own kingdoms and make an utter hash of it all. God will bring the world back, Jesus promises, not by the power of coercion, intimidation, violence or manipulation but by the power of the cross—the self-giving, redemptive love of Christ.

Continued on page 17

Our primary allegiance is to the way, the truth and the life of Jesus.

Continued from page 16

Jesus went to Jerusalem knowing what he was walking into. He was the ultimate political realist. In the shadow of power he said to his followers: "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them" (Mark 10:42). That is the way it has always worked in all our kingdoms and countries.

But that is not the way God works. In God's kingdom, "whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant" (10:43). For Jesus there is no seat of power for lording it over others, only a towel and basin for a life of service.

That is why they killed him. Not just because he had different ideas about administering the Middle East or different budget priorities for Jerusalem but because he embodied a whole new way of living that fundamentally threatened the powers-that-be. When he got to Jerusalem, the rulers lorded it over him. They plotted against him, arrested and tortured him. Even in that confrontation with the powers, Jesus embodied a new way—he lived without fear, spoke the truth and he refused to respond to violence in kind.

On Good Friday the powers-that-be killed him, but on Easter Sunday the power of God's love raised him to new life. Ever since, we have been invited to follow Christ in this new way of living—the way of love instead of fear, the way of truth instead of self-serving deception, the way of shalom instead of coercion, intimidation and violence.

We are invited to follow the way of Jesus even when we open our ballot and vote. His response to politics as usual should guide our response. First, he lived without fear. Fear is at the heart of most political rhetoric. Fear is a primary motivator of people on both the left and right—fear of terrorism and immigration, fear of too much or too little government, fear of staying the course or "cutting and running." I do not want to vote for or against what I am supposed to be afraid of. As a follower of Jesus, I want to vote for what is good, hopeful and possible.

Second, Jesus spoke the truth; even more, he embodied the truth. When I vote, I want to look at the ballot in the light of Christ's life. Where do I see his kind of grace, compassion and hope? Where do I see his commitment to life that is meaningful, true and just? Where do I see his concern "for the least of these"—people who are hungry, have limited access to medical care, are without decent housing, are vulnerable and poor?

Third, Jesus refused to respond to violence with violence. I have no illusion that the government will ever become pacifist. We are pacifist because of our faith in Jesus. No one can coerce that kind of belief. And apart from that kind of belief in Christ, one cannot expect the ethics of Christ. But the biblical vision of shalom guides us still. So I am voting for candidates or measures that bend toward God's just peace, work for reconciliation and value neighbors, strangers and even enemies.

However we vote on Nov. 4, though, our hope does not lie with the results that will be reported on Nov. 5. Who wins will make a difference, but any candidate is only incrementally better than the other. In the end, politics as usual will always demand ultimate loyalty and defend itself with violence. Both of those are fundamentally anti-gospel.

I do not want to vote for or against what I am supposed to be afraid of. As a follower of Jesus, I want to vote for what is good, hopeful and possible.

Chris Roberts put it this way in the last election cycle in an editorial in *The Other Side*: "The fact is, no matter who wins the election, Christians will still be in the opposition. None of the major candidates seriously challenges the U.S. commitment to an economy rooted in consumerism, rampant individualism and a sense of entitlement. Nobody in this campaign seems to entertain forgiveness and self-sacrifice as a national foreign policy."

Our primary allegiance is to the way, the truth and life of Jesus. So vote on Nov. 4. More importantly, vote everyday. Vote with a basin and towel and a life of service. Vote with a cup of cold water, food for the hungry and homes for the displaced. Vote with words of forgiveness and a commitment to integrity. Vote with your life.

Rod Stafford is lead pastor of Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church. This article is drawn from a sermon preached prior to the general election in 2006.

A dialogue toward peace with Iran

Arli Klassen is MCC executive director.

J. Daryl Byler MCC representative for Iran, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine.

For details about the dialogue, please visit mcc.org.

Strong opinions have been expressed over Mennonite Central Committee's participation in the Sept. 25 dinner and dialogue that included Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Some news media spread incorrect information about the event's purpose. Our goal was respectful, peace-building dialogue, not to honor the president or any other individual. In sharing a meal with such a controversial figure, we were drawing on both the deep spiritual roots that sustained our persecuted ancestors and on Jesus' example.

Last month in New York City, a simple oil lamp glowed on the podium before the gathering of people of diverse faiths. MCC gave such a lamp to President Ahmadinejad last year. Similar lamps yield gentle yet insistent light in many Mennonite and Brethren in Christ worship services. In every situation, we look to the light of Christ to lead us.

MCC has been given a mandate to carry out relief, development and peace work by Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Canada and the United States. Together we hold to a commitment to obey Jesus by loving one's enemies and responding to aggression with positive action (Luke 6:21-36). Our work in Iran, including these meetings with its president, focuses on building bridges of peace between countries that see each other as enemies.

Counsel to converse: MCC's meetings with President Ahmadinejad grew out of nearly 20 years of on-the-ground program experience and trusting relationships with Iranians.

Some have suggested that MCC should not meet with such a controversial political leader. MCC has sought the guidance of church leaders. On balance, the counsel has been to continue the conversations. Leaders believe it is important for the church to talk about the practical meaning of peacemaking in our world. At the Sept. 25 event, Patricia Shelly, professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., gave a powerful reflection on how Anabaptist peacemaking is rooted in the example and teachings of Jesus.

U.S. government officials also have encouraged MCC to continue the dialogue. The United States has not had diplomatic relations with Iran for nearly 30 years and teeters on the brink of military action against it. In this context, the consequences of not talking seem to greatly outweigh its risks—especially until the governments of Iran and the United States speak directly to one another. Relations between Canada and Iran also have been deteriorating, and conversation is often difficult.

Progress and challenge: MCC has now held four meetings with President Ahmadinejad, all initiated by him. Has anything changed as a result of these conversations? It is difficult to assess the long-term impact, but several things stand out.

First, we better understand each other's points of view. President Ahmadinejad knows that MCC, which has partners and programs with both Israelis and Palestinians, believes the Holocaust is a historical fact and one of the great tragedies of the 20th century, and that we want him to change the way he talks about it. He knows MCC is deeply concerned about the situation for Palestinians but also about his rhetoric regarding the State of Israel. He knows that we believe any solution to the conflict must provide peace with justice for all.

Second, we believe that the president's public comments have moderated somewhat over the past two years. When challenged regarding his comments about "wiping Israel off the map," Ahmadinejad has said to us in previous meetings and, at last, in interviews with both CNN and the *Los Angeles Times* in late September, that he is not talking about a military solution. Rather, he supports the "one-state" solution, a political resolution in which Israelis and Palestinians elect a single government to represent both peoples.

Third, the circle of conversation has expanded. The most recent meeting included, for the first time, several Jewish representatives as well as government policymakers. This is a hopeful direction.

Still, our conversations with President Ahmadinejad sometimes feel like ships passing in the night. Both participants in the dialogue seem to see themselves as "prophets" to the other. MCC and the other faith groups that have met with the president are compelled to challenge his controversial comments and call for greater freedoms inside Iran. He emphasizes the dominating U.S. role in the world and the Israeli occupation of Palestine. He consistently calls on the powerful nations of the world to show respect in relating to Iran.

And we are greatly troubled by reports of increased religious persecution in Iran and the expanding use of the death penalty to punish reli

Continued on page 25

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Mission connects people across borders, oceans**—Hannah Heinzekehr

Schrag announces plans for retirement

Ron Byler, associate executive director, will also leave post in late 2009.

In an Oct. 9 letter to Mennonite Church USA moderator Sharon Waltner, executive director Jim Schrag made official his plans to retire Nov. 30, 2009. He previously had discussed his plans with the entire Executive Board at its Sept. 18-20 meeting in Philadelphia. Schrag planned to make the announcement public Oct. 19 at the Constituency Leaders Council meeting in Santa Fe, N.M. Executive Leadership staff and agency directors were informed prior to the CLC meeting.

"The time has come for me to express my desire to retire from this calling on Nov. 30, 2009," Schrag wrote in the letter. "In the remaining year, I will continue to serve the cause of Christ through this office and under the direction of the Executive Board."

The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board will establish a search committee to identify the next leader of Mennonite Church USA. According to Waltner, the committee "will work with deliberate speed, but without a deadline, to find the person who will help us move forward together in the next phase" of the denomination's life and ministry.

Schrag's plans to retire in November 2009 coincide with his 65th birthday and come after 35 years of ministry. Judy, his wife, retired earlier this year from teaching special education. Schrag has served in the executive director role since the transformation of Mennonite Church USA in 2001. He was project director for the transformation team from 1999 to 2001 and general secretary of the former General Conference Mennonite Church from 1996 to 1999.

Waltner said Oct. 14 that Schrag has been a key leader and "steadying force" in the denomination's formative years. His ability to ask difficult questions, she said, has helped Mennonite Church USA more fully embrace and live out its vision to share God's healing and hope with the world.

"Jim has worked steadfastly to help Mennonite Church USA pursue its vision of becoming a missional church," Waltner said. "His efforts have been tireless and sacrificial, and we are deeply grateful for his work. Jim was instrumental in the formation of Mennonite Church USA, a critical effort that we simply cannot overlook. The whole of Mennonite Church USA owes a significant debt of gratitude to Jim for his lifetime commitment to our church."

Schrag's professional career began in 1966 after he graduated from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and married Judy Nickel the same year. He spent one year as a social studies teacher in Clay Center, Kan., before he and Judy took on a three-year term as teachers in Kenya through Mennonite Central Committee's Teachers Abroad Program. Upon returning to the United States, the couple moved to Elkhart, Ind., where Schrag attended Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Mennonite Church USA

Jim Schrag, left, stands with Thoung Mguen near his boat in Venice, La. Schrag met Thoung, a member of Lighthouse Mennonite Fellowship in Buras, La., on a trip to the Gulf States region in May 2006.

Shortly after receiving his master of divinity degree in 1973, Schrag pursued what would become a 23-year calling to pastoral ministry. Beginning that year, Schrag spent 12 years as pastor of Tabor Mennonite Church in Newton, Kan. Then, in 1985, he began an 11-year stint as pastor at Oak Grove Mennonite Church in Smithville, Ohio.

"I have been privileged to work shoulder to shoulder with many dedicated leaders across the church," Schrag said. "I trust that our efforts together have resulted in a combined ministry that is a sign and foretaste of the kingdom of God."

Ron Byler: One of the leaders Schrag has worked "shoulder to shoulder" with in recent years has also made known his plans for ending ministry with Mennonite Church USA. In July 2007, associate executive director Ron Byler made known to the Executive Board and Schrag his decision to complete his employment with Mennonite Church USA between July and December 2009. He has yet to determine the exact date his resignation will become official.

"When I was called to churchwide leadership in 1996," Schrag said, "I didn't think I would serve beyond the transition in 2001. But I learned that transformation is continuing in the church and so I accepted the call to continue. "It has been both a challenge and a blessing to be in this ministry."
—Marathana Prothro for Mennonite Church USA

Congregations address 'divisive' politics

Speakers model dialogue at Franklin Conference forum on politics on Sept. 7.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., hosts Wednesday evening meetings through Nov. 12 entitled "Our Faith and the Presidential Election." Pastor Neil Amstutz led the first meeting on Sept. 24; it addressed how to talk about the Nov. 4 election and established some conversation guidelines.

Amstutz led several exercises in which participants named their hopes and fears for the conversations, as well as how they would like to be listened to. Then groups of twos and threes gathered to share stories from their younger years that influenced their political views today, one lesson they learned about politics and who they learned it from. The first night drew double the usual Wednesday night crowd, Amstutz said on Oct. 1.

On Oct. 3, Amstutz also made a presentation at a meeting of primarily Hispanic Christian leaders in the Goshen area to address faith and politics. There was "helpful discussion that moved beyond just this election," he said on Oct. 7.

Other congregations, including Seattle Mennonite Church and Pittsburgh Mennonite Church, have adult Sunday school classes on faith and politics this fall.

Franklin Mennonite Conference held a conference-wide forum Sept. 7 on the subject of "Mennonites in Government and Politics." John D. Roth, Goshen (Ind.) College professor, and Everett J. Thomas, city council member for Goshen, Ind., were the resource people.

After the conference, Ray Geigley, conference leadership commission member, said this issue was "getting so divisive in our churches." Franklin Conference, known as a conservative conference in Mennonite Church USA, has many churches located in heavily military and Republican areas.

Divisive or not, people came together for this forum. Geigley reported over 150 at each session, which is well over what they anticipated.

Thomas defended his political involvement, and Roth described his sabbatical from politics, Geigley said.

"John and Everett modeled for us how Christians should dialogue," Geigley said, noting that as the forum's highlight. "You have respect, you listen to one another and you give the other people respect."

The committee felt anxious at times during the planning and wondered, "will this be helpful or hurtful?" Geigley said. But from the feedback the committee has received, Geigley said he believes the forum provided a positive step.

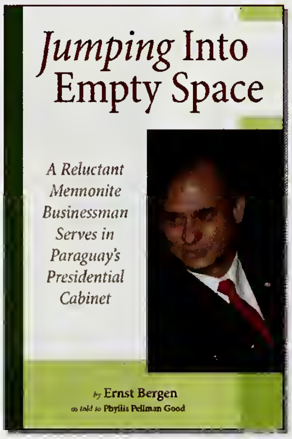
Thomas and Roth presented two sides to the issue: Geigley said one attendee reported it was refreshing to hear that one can serve as an elected official without feeling less than Christian.

On the other hand, Rochelle Kniss, commission member, noted Roth's point that choosing not be politically involved does not mean that you are doing nothing.

"I really appreciated the fact that we weren't questioning Scripture," said Melanie Zook, commission member. "We were simply questioning how involved we can be and still hold allegiance to Christ."—*Anna Groff*

Coming November 1

Ernst Bergen, a Mennonite businessman, became the Finance Minister of Paraguay. Boyhood in the Chaco. Tensions with authority. Courtship. Incredible business success. Thrust into government with all of its problems. This is the story of Ernst Bergen, as told to *New York Times* bestselling author Phyllis Pellman Good.


Jumping Into Empty Space
A Reluctant Mennonite Businessman Serves in Paraguay's Presidential Cabinet
by Ernst Bergen
as told to Phyllis Pellman Good

Ernst with Phyllis

More than 140 pages.
$11.95 (includes photos)

Good Books www.GoodBooks.com

"What a day to train leaders for the church! The world, like never before, is asking Mennonites to step up and show the way toward God's peaceable Kingdom. Imagine!"

Sara Wenger Shenk
associate dean of the seminary

EASTERN MENNONITE SEMINARY
A Graduate Division of Eastern Mennonite University

1200 Park Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
(800) 710-7871
seminary@emu.edu
emu.edu/seminary

Paraguay & Peru

Join

Everett and Barbara Thomas
in Paraguay for
Mennonite World Conference
and then beautiful Peru

ITINERARY*

July 12, 2009	Overnight flight to Asunción
July 13	Asunción
July 14-18	MWC Assembly Gathered
July 19	Worship/free time in Asunción
July 20	Hospital Mennonita, Iguassu Falls
July 21	Flight to Lima, Peru
July 22	Lima and Cuzco
July 23	Cuzco and the "Sacred Valley"
July 24	Machu Picchu "Lost City of the Incas"
July 25	Free/Machu Picchu (optional)
July 26-27	Return flight home

Everett Thomas is a veteran of four Mennonite World Conference assemblies and can put your experience with the 2009 Assembly Gathered into the context of the previous 20 years.

*Itinerary is subject to change. For complete details including the tour itinerary, rates and inclusions, please contact:

Tara Nisley, Group Travel Specialist
Menno Travel Service
Phone: 574-975-7766 or 866-606-6198
Email: tara@mennotrav.com
Web site: www.mennotrav.com

Menno House celebrates 50 years

Kyle Dean Reinford

More than 120 people gathered in New York City Sept.19-21 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Menno House.

On Sept. 19-21, Menno House in New York City celebrated its 50th anniversary. In 1957, Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions purchased a row house near Gramercy Park for Mennonite volunteers coming to New York to start urban congregations or to do alternative service to the military draft. In 1977, it became a Mennonite student center, quickly acquiring the name "Menno House." Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship—a congregation that house residents helped form in the 1980s—purchased Menno House in 1997. Today, residents include Mennonite Voluntary Service and Mennonite Central Committee volunteers, students and nonprofit workers. Three guest rooms accommodate city visitors, and lower floors contain a Peace and Anabaptist Library and office space for MMF.—*Angela Showalter and Skip Kempe with Lowell Brown*

Attribution: The article on page 21 (Oct. 7) was originally published in *Canadian Mennonite* (July 28).

Paraguay 2009

Mennonite World Conference

Assembly Gathered
Asunción, Paraguay
14-19 July 2009

Assembly Scattered
across Latin America
and the Caribbean
before and after
Assembly Gathered

REGISTER NOW!
www.mwc-cmm.org

God is calling us to Paraguay... ¡Vamos!

"Come together in the way of Jesus Christ."
—Philippians 2:1-11

Three Mennonite books make the news: facts questioned; balloon rides; 6,500 sold

Rosanna of the Amish: fact and fiction

Much as author Joseph W. Yoder had convinced readers, editors and critics for a half century that his book was—as he claimed—factual, so today a growing consensus among scholars would call it fiction.

Sales: Insurance and financial services

Combine your professional skills and your Christian faith values

MMA®
Stewardship Solutions

MMA, an established, church-related organization, is seeking sales professionals to provide insurance and financial solutions to one of the industry's most loyal markets.

MMA is a highly trusted organization serving individuals and businesses primarily associated with Mennonite and other Anabaptist-related denominations. Excellent income potential and generous benefits. To learn more, visit www.mma-online.org/careers. Fax or e-mail resume to (574) 537-6635 or hr@mma-online.org.

Good work...*advanced.*

The Marsh Foundation (Van Wert, OH) contracted with AAI for a communications audit.

The Marsh Foundation has served children and families since 1922.

ADVANCEMENT Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Consulting In
Strategic Visioning
Fundraising
Capital Campaigns
Enrollment

Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

The factual nature of the book was especially believable because, according to Yoder's biographer, Julia Spicher Kasdorf, the author "was provoked to write this book" and said it was "based on fact." Yoder had grown "disgusted with the unflattering and inaccurate representations of the Amish people" as they appeared in the popular literature of the 1930s and 1940s.

By the turn of the 21st century, over 400,000 copies of the book had been sold, and in the 1995 "centennial edition," his grandniece Rosanna Yoder Hostetler, who vividly remembered the dramatic singer and writer, wrote a new foreword. She simply said: "*Rosanna* is not fiction. It is notable for its documented settings, names and happenings."

Staff members of the publisher, Herald Press, had no reason to believe otherwise—constantly updating it on what the Amish were "really like" and selling it to a growing tourist market.

Kasdorf, a professor at Penn State University, led the reassessment and wrote a new introduction to the most recent Herald Press edition of *Rosanna*. She says that Yoder's book on his mother was "based on fact" only "in a figurative sense."

Even before the scholarly dissenters from Rosanna's factual history went public, there were rumblings in Yoder's beloved Big Valley in Pennsylvania. One local informant cited in Kasdorf's biography said, "It's too bad J.W. Yoder did not write something that was true."

Mifflin County Amish and Mennonite historian Duane Kauffman hinted in the same direction in his 1991 history, but then went public in the July 2008 issue of *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* with an article entitled, "*Rosanna of the Amish*: Fact or Fiction?"

In the new "The Restored Text" edition, Kasdorf recasts the book as an example of "local color" or "regional" literature. Kasdorf says that Yoder wrote to resist the negative stereotypes and bias that plain Anabaptists suffered in his time. Although Yoder may have accomplished important cultural work, he misrepresented his project, says Kasdorf. Thus the 1940s classic enters contemporary debates about factuality in memoirs and other works of nonfiction.

As literature, it may matter less that Rosanna's brothers, William and John, were likely her uncles; that Scranton, Pa., and railroad lines between various points in the tale did not exist at the time; and

United Methodists buy book from Mennonite Men; balloon ride is reward for Reuben *fans and new* Rosanna *edition addresses questions about historicity.*

that census records have Rosanna's parents born in Pennsylvania, not in Ireland, as Yoder would have it.—*Mennonite Publishing Network*

Reuben and the Balloon celebrated with ride

Lively Amish farm boy Reuben is back in a new children's book, *Reuben and the Balloon*, from the bestselling duo, Merle Good and P. Buckley Moss (see photo at right).

Moss and Good appeared at The P. Buckley Moss Gallery in Intercourse, Pa., on Sept. 19 and 20 to sign copies of their new book (published by Good Books) and prints of artwork from the book.

Three fans of the series took a free hot air balloon ride at sunrise on Sept. 20 to celebrate the book's release. The three readers were chosen from a drawing at The Gallery and were the special guests of Good, author, and Moss, artist. The previous three children's books by the same team have sold more than 135,000 copies.

To commemorate the release of *Reuben and the Balloon*, Moss has created two new paintings entitled "Balloons Aloft" and "Balloon in Our Orchard." The paintings have been published as limited edition prints and were released first at the show.—*Good Books*

Dean Mast

P. Buckley Moss (left) and Merle Good (right) launch their new children's book release with a hot air balloon ride. Stan Hess of the United States Hot Air Balloon Team is also pictured.

Mennonite Men book sells to Methodists

Copies of *Wrestling with God: Devotional Readings for Men* are now finding their way into the homes of United Methodist men. In September, United Methodist Men Ministries ordered 6,500 copies of *Wrestling with God* (Faith and Life Resources, 2007). J. Lorne Peachey and Gordon Houser wrote the book's proposal at the request of Jim Gingerich, Mennonite Men coordinator. Byron Rempel-Burkholder served as the book's editor.

United Methodist Men Ministries learned of the book through Gingerich and Mennonite Men. Both men's groups are members of the Denominational Men's Ministry Network of North America, an ecumenical organization with one of its goals to share resources.

"I would see this as one of the benefits of being involved in the larger ecumenical scene," said Gingerich on Oct 1. "It doesn't help Mennonite Men financially, but it is some pretty good promotion for us and Mennonite Publishing Network."

After Mennonite Men shared the book with the network a year and a half ago, Larry Malone, director for United Methodist Men Ministries, picked up on the book suggestion and placed the order. The books are sent to donors to United Methodist Men Ministries.—*Anna Groff*

VIDEO CLIPS
AT YOUR FINGERTIPS
store.mennomedia.org

Workers in the Field • Parable of the Talents • People Gots Ta Eat • Battle of the Scissors • Glen Eco Farm • Tomato Story • Act of the Peace Chiefs • Calling for Peace • Drawing the Line • Food Choices for Peace • Hesston Flag • Price of Conscience • I Travelled to Ireland • A Hand Extended • DEO in Denver • Four Truths • Auctioneer at Home • Junior High

NOW SHOWING
on a computer near you:
19 downloadable video clips

Clips include stories of *forgiveness, service, peacemaking* and much more. Use video clips for worship inspiration, sermon illustration, youth groups, devotions, small group study. Discussion guides included. Under $10.

Go to: store.mennomedia.org and click on "downloads"

Mennonite Media
1251 Virginia Avenue
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
800.999.3534

We came for the Values, and the Value.

MENNO HAVEN
Relationships. Values. Options.
MENNO VILLAGE • NORTHFIELD • PENN HALL
800.222.6695 www.mennohaven.org
Menno Haven is committed to providing equal housing for all.

Rosser grant helps Colombian children

Feeding programs for displaced children provide nourishment and peace.

Shalom Wiebe

Amparo Ortiz, Cristina Ortiz, Esperanza Ortiz and Amparo Rodriguez eat at Los Pinos Comedor in a neighborhood south of Bogotá, Colombia.

Regular meals in *comedores* (dining rooms), ministries of Iglesia Cristiana Menonita de Colombia (Colombian Mennonite Church), provide nourishment for the youngest members of families displaced by violence.

Members of the Colombian Mennonite Church have a costly commitment to peace in this conflict-torn country. Their conviction that lasting peace cannot be achieved when people are hungry led the church to add a feeding program ministry.

In 2007, the Colombian Mennonite Church's ministries to children received the equivalent of a high-protein supplement through a generous gift from Ellen Rosser. Most of her $20,000 donation became a grant to the Colombian Mennonite Church for 10 projects for at-risk children.

The outreach ministries of the Ibagué congregation were among those able to increase their scope through Rosser's gift. Members had been working in Modelia, a neighborhood composed entirely of displaced people, for six years. In 2005, they opened a *comedor* that provided lunch for 20 children once a week. A year later, they were able to feed 50 children twice a week. In 2007, with the boost of Rosser's gift, they welcomed 70 children three times a week. Ibagué members began Sunday morning services in Modelia for the children who participated in their lunch program and their families. Later a daughter church formed.—*Shalom Wiebe for Mennonite Mission Network*

Herald Press: Books for Reading this Fall

Rosanna of the Amish: The Restored Text

Joseph W. Yoder's thrilling narrative of an Irish Catholic baby girl brought up by an Amish woman, represents the beginnings of Mennonite literature in America. In this new edition, the original 1940 text is restored, and the classic book is placed in its cultural and historical context with a critical introduction by Julia Spicher Kasdorf.

"A historical gem. Yoder offers an intriguing and intimate glimpse into late 19th-century Amish life in Pennsylvania."—*Donald B. Kraybill*

Paper, 358 pages, $15.99

Like a Mustard Seed: Mennonites in Paraguay

Edgar Stoesz tells the inspiring story of the Russian, Canadian, and Mexican Mennonites who, beginning in 1927, emigrated to Paraguay and made a new homeland out of the jungle wilderness. In the succeeding decades, Mennonite communities in Paraguay have established schools, clinics, hospitals, churches, and farms. This is a fascinating story that deserves a prominent place in the annuals of Mennonite history. Coming in November.

Paper, 280 pages, $24.99

Herald Press

A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

Christian-Muslim dialogue in Asheville

Pat Hostetter Martin, three Muslim panelists tell U.S audience about Islam.

"Can We Talk? A Muslim-Christian Dialogue" was the first event sponsored by Asheville (N.C.) Peace Builders, a group initiated by City View Quaker Church, Asheville, and a small group from Asheville Mennonite Church.

The Sept. 20 dialogue was led by Pat Hostetter Martin, retired director of the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., and joined by three Muslim panelists, all graduates or current students in the master's program in conflict transformation at EMU's Center for Peace and Justice.

The audience represented religious traditions, including Mennonite, Quaker, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Unitarian Universalist, Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i, Hindu, Buddhist and atheist.

Building understanding centered on learning about Islam. Panelist Fatemah Darabi of Tehran, Iran, explained "Islam" means "peace." She explained the origins and make up of the Quran, along with the five pillars of the faith from the Shi'a perspective.

Panelist Hamida Hudda of India explained there are many sects in Islam just like there are many denominations in Christianity. Panelist Hamid Arsalan of Afghanistan said he was dismayed at the lack of academic research in the West on the positive, nonviolent aspects of Islam.

"There were tons [of books] on Islam and violence," Arsalan said.—*Teresa Aeschliman*

Leadership *(continued from page 18)*

gious converts. Last month, we asked President Ahmadinejad to allow Iranians to make their own choices as to which religion they will follow. We were able to say this to him because of this meeting. Face-to-face conversations create space to clarify perspectives and raise hard questions.

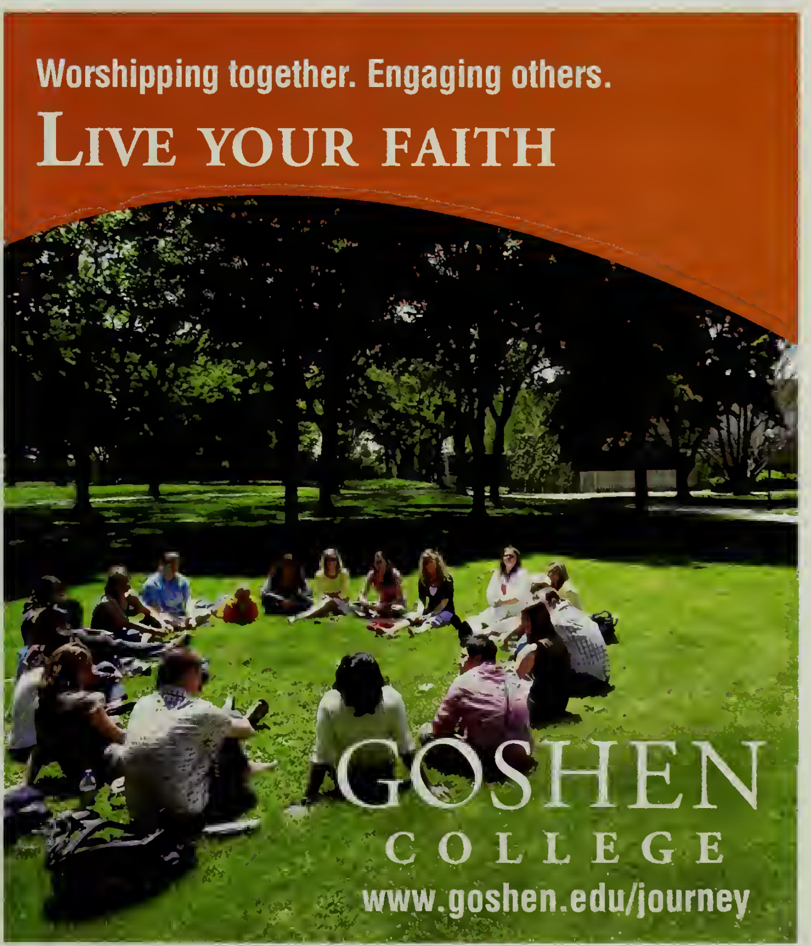
Following Christ's light: We, too, can be skeptical about the value of these meetings with the president of Iran. But when the doors are opened for us to be agents of Christ's peace, we cannot step away. God calls us to engage those with whom we disagree.

Please pray with us and for MCC, that we may be wise in the way of Christ, and foolish in the way of the world, as we follow Christ's light toward peace with Iran.

timely tip:
Practice bicycle safety!

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business. Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.


Worshipping together. Engaging others.
LIVE YOUR FAITH

GOSHEN COLLEGE
www.goshen.edu/journey

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.

WORKERS

Boll, Mark B., resigned as associate pastor at Hernley Mennonite Church, Manheim, Pa., on Aug. 31.

Bowman, Jonathan D., was licensed as associate pastor of Christian Formation at Landisville Mennonite Church, Landisville, Pa., on Aug. 24.

Fisher, Julia H., was licensed as associate pastor of pastoral care at Landisville Mennonite Church, Landisville, Pa., on Aug. 24.

Gehman, Grant P., was licensed as director of TNT Youth Ministries, Ephrata Mennonite Church, Ephrata, Pa., on Aug. 3.

Heindel, James I., was licensed as associate pastor at Stony Brook Mennonite Church, York, Pa., on Aug. 31.

Hurst, Dale L., ended a term as interim pastor at Palo Alto Mennonite church, Pine Grove., Pa., on Aug. 31.

Stoltzfus, Dale W., bishop of the Landisville District, Landisville, Pa., retired on Aug. 24. Dale continues to serve as interim conference minister.

Thomas, Melvin H., was installed as interim pastor at Gehman Mennonite Church, Adamstown, Pa., on July 6.

Yoder, Kathy D., resigned as associate pastor at Landisville Mennonite Church, Landisville, Pa., on Aug. 10.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bates, Adeline Grace, Sept. 6, to Matthew and Sarah Brady Bates, South Bend, Ind.

Benfer, Hunter Lee, Sept. 10, to Harry and Crystal King Benfer, Yeagertown, Pa.

Borkholder, Kya Marie, Sept. 14, to Olen and Lois Borkholder, Goshen, Ind.

Chupp, Rachel Renee, Aug. 21, to Ryan and Christine Chupp, Goshen, Ind.

Fox, Ryanne Kathleen, Sept. 18, to Kevin and Melodee Fox, Waterloo, Ontario.

Hershberger, Connor James, Oct. 2, to Mike and Melissa Weaver Hershberger, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Kauffman, Wyatt Alan, Sept. 26, to Nate and Kristin Zook Kauffman, Belleville, Pa.

Lehnert, Zetta Fay, Sept. 11, to Matthew and Katherine Vines Lehnert, Toledo, Ohio.

Maddigan, Philip Jordan, Sept. 16, to Brad and Carolyn Sherk Maddigan, Waterloo, Ontario.

McHugh, Ella Beth Stoltzfus, Aug. 6, to Michael and Heidi Stoltzfus McHugh, Goshen, Ind.

Pooley, Evan Michael, Aug. 10, to David and Elizabeth Pooley, Waterloo, Ontario.

Prough, Jacelle Liana, Sept. 9, to Roger and Jennifer Vardaman Prough, Elkhart, Ind.

Yamanaka, Yoshiki, Sept. 29, to Tomoki and Angela Wenger Yamanaka, Asahikawa City, Hokkaido, Japan.

MARRIAGES

Adams/Grieser: Angel Adams and Chad Grieser, Archbold, Ohio, Sept. 27, at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Aeschliman/DeLeon: Jeff Aeschliman, Archbold, Ohio, and Jesse DeLeon, Bryan, Ohio, June 21, at home in Archbold.

Beringer/Richer: Ami Beringer, Toledo, Ohio, and Eric Richer, Wauseon, Ohio, Sept. 12, at Toledo Botanical Gardens.

Bruner/Kauffman: Megan Bruner, Archbold, Ohio, and Tim Kauffman, Pittsburgh, Pa., July 26, at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Bush/Robson: Holly Bush, Lowville, N.Y., and John Robson, Clifton Park, N.Y., Sept. 27, at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, Lowville.

Crossgrove/Murillo: Jill Crossgrove, Archbold, Ohio, and Chuck Murillo, Holland, Mich., July 5, at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Goering/Schultz: Suzanne Goering, Moundridge, Kan., and Kurtis Schultz, Kan., Sept. 20, at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.

Harvey/Yoder: Sarah Harvey, Lewistown, Pa., and Jason Yoder, Belleville, Pa., Aug. 16, at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Jarrard/Schlabach: Mark Jarrard, Reading, Pa., and Alesia Schlabach, Hartville, Ohio, Sept. 27, at Hartville Mennonite Church.

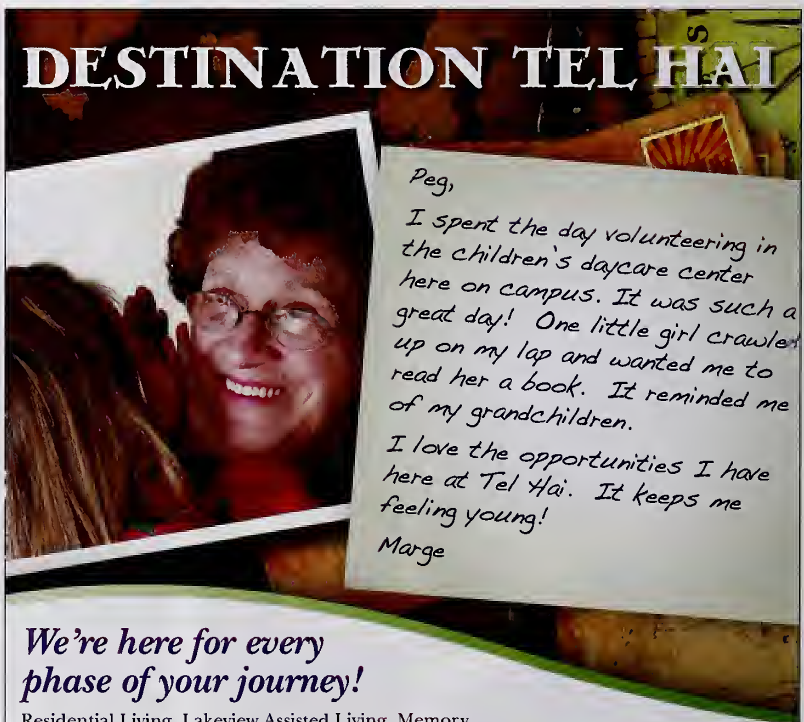
Ketcham/Ponce: Linda Ketcham, Goshen, Ind., and Armando Ponce, Shipshewana, Ind., Sept. 13, at the bride's home in Goshen.

Krehbiel/Singley: Luke Krehbiel, Hopedale, Ill., and Randi Singley, Hopedale, Sept. 6, at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Kulp/Liechty: Whitney Kulp, Landisville, Pa., and Aaron Liechty, Washington, Iowa, Aug. 16, on a farm in Landisville.

Landes/Yoder: Daniel Landes, Hilltown, Pa., and Amy Yoder, Wellman, Iowa, Aug. 16, at Wellman Mennonite Church.

Short/Zimmerman: Ashley Short, Fayette, Ohio, and Mike Zimmerman, Archbold, Ohio, June 14, at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.



DESTINATION TEL HAI

Peg,

I spent the day volunteering in the children's daycare center here on campus. It was such a great day! One little girl crawled up on my lap and wanted me to read her a book. It reminded me of my grandchildren.

I love the opportunities I have here at Tel Hai. It keeps me feeling young!

Marge

We're here for every phase of your journey!

Residential Living, Lakeview Assisted Living, Memory Support Services, Adult Day Services, Meadows Health Care Center, Rehabilitation Services, Child Day Care

1200 Tel Hai Circle | P.O. Box 190
Honey Brook, PA 19344
www.telhai.org | 610-273-9333

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

panpha

Tel Hai
Redefining Retirement™

DEATHS

Clemmer, Roy C., 87, Souderton, Pa., died Oct. 2. Spouse: Jean D. Godshall Clemmer. Parents: Willis and Laura Cassel Clemmer. Children: R. Jonathan, Justine Pletcher, Lisa Yoder, Robert, Janice Kauffman; 13 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 7 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

Eshleman, Arlene Heatwole, 98, Elkhart, Ind., died Oct. 1. Spouse: Harold Grant Eschleman (deceased). Parents: Amos and Sally Johnson Heatwole. Children: Dr. J. Robert, Ruth Schrock, Dr. Kennth Lee; five grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 18 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Evers, Annagene Mae Miller, 76, Wauseon, Ohio, died Sept. 30. Spouse: Melvin Lee Evers. Parents: Gideon and Lena Nofziger Miller. Children: Tabb, Troy, Tammy Peters; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 4 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Franks, Ray, 65, Bluffton, Ohio, died Sept. 2. Spouse: Carolyn Gratz Franks. Funeral: Sept. 13 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Frey, Marie Crossgrove, 91, Archbold, Ohio, died Sept. 21. Spouse: Vernon Frey. Parents: Samuel and Ida Nofziger Crossgrove. Children: Elaine Frey, Donald, Duane, Diane Bodiker, Joyce Troyer; nine grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 25 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Good, Warren E., 84, Lancaster, Pa., died Oct. 3. Spouse: Minerva Horning Good. Parents: Joseph A. and Ivy Bender Good. Children: Minerva Good, Howard, Judy J. Kunkle, Ivy Jo Martin, Ginger Martin; 12 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 9 at Ephrata Mennonite Church, Ephrata, Pa.

Grieser, Dorothy M., 96, Archbold, Ohio, died Sept. 22. Parents: Daniel J. and Rosa Beck Grieser. Funeral: Oct. 1 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Schlegel, Walter N., 88, Lansdale, Pa., died Sept. 28. Spouse: Marion Gehman Schlegel. Parents: Nicholas and Matme Brunner Schlegel. Child: Ronald; one grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 3 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale.

Shenk, Janet A. Burkholder, 65, Lancaster, Pa., died Sept. 10 of cancer. Spouse: David Shenk. Parents: John A. and Myrtle E. Huber Burkholder. Children: Janelle Beitzel, Pam Richardson, Gina Canete; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 14 at Landisville Mennonite Church, Landisville, Pa.

Stamm, Martha J. Eicher, 86, Archbold, Ohio, died Sept. 5. Spouse: Walter Stamm. Parents: Arthur and Bertha Burkholder Eicher. Children: Edward, Roger, Dale, Pat Bondi, Karen Wyse; 19 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Wenger, Edith Grace, 87, Chesapeake, Va., died Sept. 26. Spouse: John D. Wenger. Children: Barbara Cippola, Harold, Howard, Beverley Mitchell, Christine Nofsinger, Sidney, Preston, Richard, Louise Sommers; 18 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 5 at Mt. Pleasant Mennonite Church, Chesapeake.

Ziegler, Mabel Lida Holloway, 88, Columbiana, Ohio, died Sept. 5. Spouse: Albert Ziegler. Parents: Howard and Edith Kirk Holloway. Children: Mildred Trotter, Wanda Ziegler, Sherman; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild.

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS
Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"As a Bible professor and director of peace and conflict studies at Bluffton University, I have the opportunity to emphasize and live out in the classroom the Mennonite values of close attention to scripture and nonviolent action. I love reading the Bible with students and thinking about how Jesus' teachings ask all of his disciples to be peacemakers. It is exciting to see students take Jesus' call seriously for their own lives as they are making decisions about what sorts of people they will be in the world."

– Laura Brenneman, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion and director of peace and conflict studies

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

Ever wanted to hang out with youth in the Pacific Northwest, enjoy the Cascade Mountains, the Oregon Coast and play music? **Lebanon (Ore.) Mennonite Church** is seeking a ***full-time associate pastor*** to help with youth and music programs. If interested please contact us at kauffman@netzero.com or send resume to LMC, P.O. Box 575, Lebanon, OR 97355, or call 541-258-5789 or 541-409-3336.

Bluffton University invites applications for a ***full-time tenure-track faculty position in communication*** to begin fall 2009. Academic preparation in communication, public relations, cultural and media studies or related field. Ph.D. preferred; ABD or MA/MS with professional experience considered. Terminal degree required for tenure. Professional experience or research focus in nonprofit sector preferred. Evidence of excellence in teaching and ability to mentor students. Teach a combination of courses from such areas as public relations, public speaking and journalism. Possibly advise student newspaper and/or yearbook. Compensation is commensurate with education and experience within the university pay scale. Review of applications begins Nov. 15 and continues until an appointment is made. Send letter of interest, curriculum vita or resumé, three letters of reference (submitted directly from referee or if necessary from placement office) and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Academic Affairs, Bluffton University, 1 University Drive, Bluffton, OH 45817-2104. See www.bluffton.edu. Bluffton University welcomes applications from all academically qualified people who respect the Anabaptist/Mennonite peace church tradition and endorse Christian higher education in a liberal arts environment. Members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. EOE.

***Ski youth retreat package*, Timberline Four Seasons Resort, W.Va.**, starting at $99 a night plus tax. Includes lodging, meals, lifts, skis, lesson. Info: www.timberlineresort.com; 800-392-0152. West Virginia Wild and Wonderful.

Business administration. **Bethel College**, North Newton, Kan. ***Full-time business faculty*** to teach courses in entrepreneurship, business ethics, organizational behavior, small business management, human resource management and finance. Start date: Fall 2009. Review of applications will begin Nov. 3, 2008. For more information see www. Bethelks.edu. EOE/AA

English conversation teachers needed. Connexus, a **Korea Anabaptist Center** ministry, needs university grads for 12-month terms. Variable start dates. Round-trip fare, salary, housing, training, etc. provided. Visit www.connexus.co.kr/english for more information.

Senior Investment Officer

MMA is seeking an investment officer to provide development, oversight, and support of the delivery of MMA's non-proprietary investment platform. Qualified candidates will have an undergraduate degree in business or related field; minimum 5 years significant investment experience; Series 65 license; CFP® or ChFC designation.

MMA, a stewardship solutions organization affiliated with Anabaptist denominations, provides insurance and financial services. We are an equal opportunity employer offering a competitive salary and excellent benefits. For more information about this position, visit our Web site, www.mma-online.org. Send cover letter and resume to:

MMA
Human Resources
P.O. Box 483
Goshen, IN 46527
careers@mma-online.org
Fax: (574) 537-6635

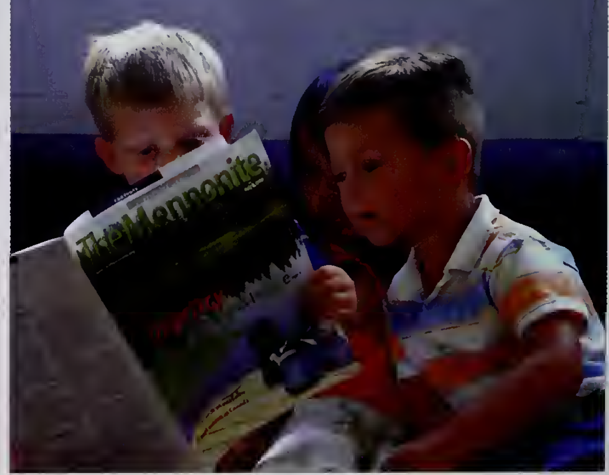
MMA®

Group savings

By subscribing ***today*** with other members of your congregation or community you can enjoy *The Mennonite*'s inspiring commentary, news, editorials and articles at a group discount. Receive bimonthly issues packed full of material that will challenge and inspire you. *The Mennonite* provides a forum for voices within Mennonite Church USA, encourages the ministries of our denomination and helps members build loyalty to our church.

To subscribe as a group, log onto our Web site at **www.TheMennonite.org** or call Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498.**

TheMennonite



Joy

Winnie Moyco shares her joy in the Lord as she's baptized by Mennonite Mission Network worker Andy Wade and Nora Iwarat.

Together, sharing
all of Christ
with all of creation

Mennonite
Mission
Network

The mission agency of
Mennonite Church USA

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary invites AMBS graduates who are in the first two to five years of their first congregational ministry assignment to apply for ***Clarifying the Call, a weekend of conversation, support and learning***. Graduates of other ministry training programs may apply and will be considered as space allows. The event will be March 26-29, 2009, at AMBS. See more information and an application form at www.ambs.edu/clarifyingthecall or call the AMBS Church Leadership Center, 574-296-6269.

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference seeks a self-motivated, visionary and missional-minded ***executive conference minister*** who will help us live into a newly defined mission: promoting personal spiritual development, nurturing healthy congregations, making strong connections and calling each other to fulfill God's purpose. The successful candidate will be ordained, able to be ordained or have pastoral or chaplaincy experience. See the full job description at www.pnmc.org. Women and racial/ethnic people are encouraged to apply, bilingual proficiency is preferred (Spanish/English). Remuneration will be consistent with denominational salary guidelines. Applicants should submit letter of interest and completed Ministerial Leadership Information form (http://www.mennoniteusa.org/Portals/0/MLI/) to PNMC Search Committee, c/o David Hockman-Wert, 420 SE Richland Ave., Corvallis, OR 97333, or dhwert@yahoo.com. Applications will be reviewed beginning Nov. 1. Expected start date: Feb. 1, 2009.

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. in Akron, Pa., is a Christian relief and development organization with a strong commitment to peacemaking. MCC U.S. is seeking qualified applicants for a ***human resources director*** to facilitate a network of practitioners across the United States. Three years of experience in human resources management, recruitment and interpretation of employment law are required. A job description is available at www.mcc.org/serve. Send resumé and letter of interest to: Becky Stahly at rss@mcc.org, or MCC Human Resources, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, or call 717-859-1151. Application review begins Nov. 14.

Portland Mennonite Church (www.portlandmennonite.org) is a growing, diverse congregation in an urban setting. We are seeking a ***full-time associate pastor of youth ministries*** to provide leadership to the church's ministry with children and students. Qualifications include a commitment to the theology and practices of Mennonite Church USA, seminary training and/or significant experience, and a passionate sense of calling to youth ministry. Interested people should contact Beulah Hess-Yoder, Search Committee Chair, at pmcadmin@teleport.com or 503-234-0559.

Singles are invited to **Spruce Lake Retreat** Dec. 5-7, 2008, for a weekend of fellowship, worship and fun! Spruce Lake is located in the beautiful Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. Singles-friendly retreat package, $185/person. Call 800-822-7505 for reservations; www.sprucelake.org.

Eastern Mennonite University, located in Virginia's scenic Shenandoah Valley, seeks qualified candidates for the position of ***provost***. The provost serves as chief academic officer of the university and supervises numerous administrative offices. The provost provides leadership and vision for internal functions of the university and develops cooperative relationships among university programs, departments and divisions. The provost assists the president in representing the university to church, community and educational constituent groups. Qualifications include earned doctorate; successful teaching, leadership, administrative and interpersonal experience at the college or university level; membership in or willingness to affiliate with an Anabaptist congregation and knowledge of the Mennonite church with a commitment to the mission of Mennonite/Anabaptist higher education. To apply send a letter of application and curriculum vitae or resumé to Loren Swartzendruber, President, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email: lorens@emu.edu. For more information, visit our Web site: www.emu.edu/humanresources.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

How good fiction reflects God's perfect love

Gordon Houser

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.—Matthew 5:48

This is one of those verses in Scripture we tend to ignore. Surely Jesus is asking the impossible. But would Jesus do that?

This verse comes after Jesus compares the command to "love your neighbor and hate your enemy" with his saying, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). This is how we show ourselves children of our Father in heaven.

And this is how we are to be perfect ("teleios" in Greek). Here that word can be translated "undivided." Just as God's love is not divided between neighbors and enemies, between the righteous and unrighteous, so our love is to be undivided. Children are to be like their Parent.

Teleios can also mean complete or mature. Here it refers to God's complete, mature love that does not distinguish between neighbor and enemy.

While this may seem impossible (or at least really difficult) to us, Jesus calls us to love that way. And fiction writers try to do something similar when they create characters.

In his book *How Fiction Works* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), book critic James Wood writes, "There is nothing harder than the creation of fictional character." We've read books with characters who are ciphers, who stand for ideas rather than live from the page. We respond to characters that seem real, that are unique or exceptional. Wood writes: "The novel is the great virtuoso of exceptionalism: it always wriggles out of the rules thrown around it. And the novelistic character is the very Houdini of that exceptionalism."

Creating characters that are unique, that live, is a form of love. I'm reminded of Mark Twain's joke about the guy who said, "I love humanity; it's people I can't stand." Jesus calls us not to love ideas but people, even those who persecute us.

An example of writing that reflects such love is Marilynne Robinson's new novel, *Home* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008). It is that rare book (*Gilead*, her previous novel, is another) that treats religion and believers with neither condescension nor acclaim. The writer is knowledgeable about religious belief yet gives no hint of attempting to influence readers' beliefs. Instead she presents each character as fully human, with flaws, good intentions and actions, anxieties and aspirations. And we come to care for each of them nearly as much as the writer does.

Home centers around Robert Boughton, a retired Presbyterian minister, but it is told mostly through the eyes of Glory, Robert's youngest daughter, who cares for her father at their home as he is dying. The novel's tension arises from the visit of Jack, Robert's wayward son and Glory's older brother. Jack is the prodigal son who returns home after 20 years.

Most of the novel is talk between and among Glory, Jack and their father, with an occasional appearance by John Ames, who, we learned in *Gilead*, baptized Jack as an infant. Yet Robinson's mastery of voice and character keep us engaged and rapt by their struggles with belief and hope, their relationships with one another. The prose forces us to slow our reading, then holds us to the extent that we are disappointed that it ends.

The care with which Robinson has created these characters is the care required to love those around us—both those we like and those we don't. Yet she doesn't set out to teach us that lesson; she simply creates good art.

In his book *A Stay Against Confusion* (Harper Collins, 2001), Ron Hansen quotes Flannery O'Connor, who warns against trying to make art (in her case, fiction) utilitarian. She writes: "What is good in itself glorifies God because it reflects God. The artist has his hands full and does his duty if he attends to his art."

Good fiction reflects God's perfect love. TM

BOOKS

Brokenness and Blessing: Towards a Biblical Spirituality by Frances M. Young (BakerAcademic, 2007, $16.99) draws on Scripture, the church fathers and her experience as the mother of a person with disabilities to develop a spirituality that fosters humility. She explores themes of desert, wrestling Jacob, the way of Jesus, strangers and exiles, and desire frustrated and fulfilled to show that "disability is the condition of blessing."

What We Believe Together: Exploring the 'Shared Convictions' of Anabaptist-Related Churches by Alfred Neufeld (Good Books, 2007, $9.95) is a helpful primer in the beliefs of Mennonite-related churches around the world. Published in cooperation with Mennonite World Conference, it includes study questions at the end of each chapter. Studying this book is a good step toward testing our unity as Mennonite congregations.

FILMS

In Woody Allen's **Vicky Christina Barcelona** (PG-13), Vicky, practical and engaged to be married, and her best friend, Christina, an artist searching for love and her true identity, spend their summer months in Barcelona. The film addresses people's impulsive—at times detrimental—choices when traveling out of one's element. It also contrasts U.S. materialism with European art and life. The neutral narration offers added credibility to the women's conversations and those they relate to.—*Anna Groff*

Man on Wire (PG-13) is a documentary about French high-wire artist Philippe Petit, who on Aug. 7, 1974, walked between the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center. James Marsh interviews Petit and those who helped him and builds suspense in the telling. The film addresses the need of humans to go beyond themselves, to touch infinity.—*gh*

A call to prayer:
Following Jesus in a world that is not

Un llamado a la oración:
Seguir a Jesús en un mundo que no lo sigue

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)

Fellow members of Mennonite Church USA congregations, in the name of Jesus, I give you greetings and extend to you a call to prayer.

Delegates gathered at San José 2007 passed an important resolution about our national identity as Mennonite Christians in the United States. Delegates asked the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board to help the church explore our identity as followers of Jesus living in this country. A task force has helped give shape to a process that can involve congregations.

We are greatly blessed to live in the United States. And yet we are also confronted with the challenge to be faithful in following Jesus in a world that is not. In the shifting culture around us, we are forgetting whose we are.

We are collaborating with *The Mennonite* to produce a special issue next February that will be designed for congregational study. Your responses will be part of delegate discussion, learning, confession and prayer at the delegate assembly in Columbus next summer. A young adult drama team will be available to work with conferences and congregations for the months after the assembly.

We ask for your prayers that these resources are developed and used to help all of us think more carefully about who we are and what God wants us to become. Look for more information soon.

Y a Aquel que es poderoso para hacer todas las cosas mucho más abundantemente de lo que pedimos o entendemos, según el poder que actúa en nosotros. (Efesios 3:20)

Hermanos miembros de las congregaciones de la Iglesia Menonita USA, en nombre de Jesús los saludo y les envío este llamado a la oración.

Los delegados en San José 2007 aprobaron una importante resolución sobre nuestra identidad nacional como cristianos menonitas en Estados Unidos. Ellos le pidieron a la junta directiva de la Iglesia Menonita USA que ayudaran a la iglesia a explorar nuestra identidad como seguidores de Jesús en este país. Un grupo de trabajo ha ayudado a darle forma a un proceso que puede incluir a las congregaciones.

Es una gran bendición para nosotros vivir en Estados Unidos. A la vez, se nos presenta el desafío de seguir fielmente a Jesús en un mundo que no lo sigue. En la cambiante cultura que nos rodea, olvidamos a quién pertenecemos.

Estamos colaborando con *The Mennonite (El Menonita)* en la producción una edición especial en febrero que será diseñada para el estudio en la congregación. Sus respuestas formarán parte de la discusión, aprendizaje, confesión y oraciones de los delegados durante la asamblea de los mismos en Columbus el verano próximo. Un grupo de teatro de jóvenes adultos se ofrecerá para trabajar con las conferencias y congregaciones en los meses posteriores a la convención.

Les pedimos que oren para que estos recursos se desarrollen y se utilicen con el fin de ayudarnos a todos a pensar más detenidamente quiénes somos y qué quiere Dios de nosotros. Estén pendientes de la información que pronto circularemos.

With abundant hope – con abundante esperanza,

Terry Shue

Terry Shue, Pastor, Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church

(member of Executive Board and national identity task group)
(miembro de la Junta Directiva y el grupo de trabajo por la identidad nacional)

Mennonite Church USA
Iglesia Menonita EUA

************************************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 892 15-DEC-09 S33 P5
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

Be not (politically) conformed

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God.—Romans 12:2a

As Mennonites become more involved in the partisanship around presidential elections, the unity of our fellowship is threatened by political party loyalties. But there is a better way for us to respond: Find ways to mediate between the polarized positions we experience.

On Sept. 7, I participated in a symposium sponsored by the Franklin Mennonite Conference (see page 20). Held in Chambersburg, Pa., the purpose was to help members of this conference—one of our more theologically conservative—think about the gravitational fields surrounding each political party. The symposium was originally to be a debate between John D. Roth and me. After the last presidential election—when he was scandalized by the polarization in Mennonite circles—Roth advocated that we all take a sabbatical from the 2008 presidential elections. Roth, professor of history at Goshen (Ind.) College, made his appeal in person to the Mennonite Church USA delegates at the 2005 assembly in Charlotte, N.C.

Because I have been a member of the Goshen, Ind., city council for 16 years, I was supposed to provide a counterpoint to Roth's argument. The problem: We both agreed that many of our congregations and members are involved in political party campaigns in ways that are unseemly and inappropriate.

We can confront the ugliness in the U.S. presidential election process with our convictions about peacemaking and justice.

More important than any U.S. presidential election is the unity and integrity of the church. As Paul implies in Romans, it will not be possible for us to discern the will of God if we are conformed to this world. We will not be able to rise above the hostilities and vitriol so damaging during presidential election years if we are too closely aligned with one of the partisans or either political party.

So what should be our stance between now and Nov. 4? Shall we take that sabbatical from this presidential election, as Roth proposes?

No. Rather than removing ourselves from it, the church should find its rightful place as mediator between the combatants. Our leaders should comport themselves as peacemakers; our congregations should be cities of refuge from the ugliness of the political battlefields.

This is not about being passive. It is about taking strong initiatives to depolarize the partisanship. One way to do that is to wade into the muck with holy indifference. Become informed about what both sides are saying. If you regularly watch MSNBC, then start watching Fox News. If you trust only Fox News, then start reading *The New York Times*. All are available free online.

It is not necessary to be neutral; a personal preference for one candidate or another is appropriate. The point is to listen and understand where someone picks up a particularly extreme point of view. Then address the kernel of truth around which may be layers of unfair caricature.

As a peace church, we can confront the ugliness of the election process with our convictions about peacemaking and justice. To do that, however, we cannot parrot the carefully researched campaign lines crafted by both parties. To be peacemakers in this election season, our own language and associations must be as neutral as possible. I am trying to be such a mediator in this fall's election. Because of this resolve, I resigned as a precinct committee chair and from my party's caucus in early September.

There are many ways we are conformed to the world. Much of this conforming has evolved over generations and decades. But involvement in political partisanship has come into our church more rapidly. This cultural assimilation need not spark a reaction toward separatism. Rather, we can bring our historic convictions about peacemaking to yet another battlefield. We can discipline ourselves to research the half-truths offered by friends and family members—and listen compassionately. If we do these things, then we will not be conformed to the world and can know the will of God.—*ejt*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

November 4, 2008

mission connects people

Page 8

Mission worker Hannah Eash and a friend celebrate Easter at San Antonio Mennonite Church.

12 Lived-out love
15 More than lectures
32 What good news?

Add words to deeds

James Schrag is executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

Among Christians, Mennonites are doers, if anyone is—so much so that I wish I could count the times I have heard versions of an admonition attributed to St. Francis, who counseled that in our witness we should let our deeds speak for us; we are to use words only if necessary. It is no surprise that the Letter of James is a favorite of Mennonites, who laud the idea of doing the Word, not just listening to it. Mennonites affirm, at a deep, intuitive level, that "faith without works is dead."

Put me at the end of the line if this is an attempt to debunk our laudable and practical discipleship. Far from it. But I do wish we would not bury our voice in our deeds as much as we do. I am fond of the story of a Mennonite farmer who went to a nearby town after a flood to help neighbors he did not know. At the end of the day, a grateful flood victim asked the farmer why he had come to help. The Mennonite farmer, with faithful, albeit unconscious allegiance to St Francis and the writer of James and bolstered by his inbred sense of humility, replied, "Oh, it also rained where I live, and the fields were too wet to plow today."

Imagine what might have happened if the farmer had answered, "It is my Christian obligation to help my neighbor in need." Or perhaps, "I am a Mennonite, and we want our Christian faith to be expressed through helping hands." If you don't like these responses, create your own. But fashion something that gives a "word witness" that explains the "deed witness" of the Mennonite farmer.

There are deeper dimensions to our habit of allowing deeds to stand unaccompanied by words. Sometimes I wonder if we would rather just "be Christian" without saying that we are Christian, as though the name would somehow rob the punch from our deeds. We want to "be Mennonite" but some of us think it is unnecessary (even unhelpful) to name our identity on the signs outside our places of worship. We receive admonitions from well-meaning people who say they want to be "missional" but don't want to hear the word. There are many of us who would like to be against racism without using the term "antiracist."

Jesus witnessed in both deed and word, in either order. When he taught, "Let your yes be yes and your no be no," he was offering us more than a prohibition to swearing oaths. What might happen if we decided to be forthright in our speech about who we are, what we believe and how we are joining God in God's activity in the world? (By the way, I am using missional language here.)

Maybe we are sometimes reluctant to identify ourselves by our Mennonite name because some of us are embarrassed by some of the identifiers of the past, now discarded. Others may fear the name cannot attract others because it has been held hostage too long by a narrow culture. Some of us will be reluctant to call ourselves Christian because there are Christians who speak and behave in ways we cannot own. We shy away from the word missional because some have decided it is just another buzzword. Or maybe our reason is much simpler—it may be easier, like the Mennonite farmer on an MDS errand of mercy, to just not have to explain why we showed up.

How will people know who we are and what we stand for without our speaking of it? It is not a matter of choosing between words and deeds. It is a matter of knowing this is a pair—each is incomplete without the other. May our deeds be finished by our words and our words confirmed by our deeds. TM

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 21, November 4, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

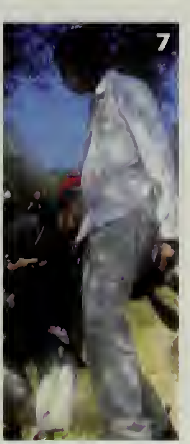
Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

NOV 12 '08

CONTENTS

A[illegible]
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN


7

16

23

13

8 A culture for mission
Mission connects people across borders and oceans.—*Hannah Heinzekehr*

12 Lived-out love
Local and global partnerships create a miracle in Benin. —*Barthélémy Dossou Bodjrenou and Raphaël Edou with Mennonite Mission Network staff*

15 More than lectures
LCC International University is born into blessings out of the Soviet rubble.—*Steve Dintaman*

19 CLC will try 'rotating white male' model
Constituency Leaders Council wrestles with racial healing, role of conferences.—*Anna Groff*

20 2009 convention to focus on Holy Spirit

21 300th anniversary

22 Meeting with Ahmadinejad debated

23 Clean fun for Mennonite ventriloquist

24 EMS opens campus in Lancaster, Pa.

DEPARTMENTS

2 Mennonite Church USA
Add words to deeds—*James Schrag*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Leadership
Mennonite by witness, not by family name—*Stanley W. Green*

26 For the record

30 Real families
An empty chair at the (political) table—*Gerald Shenk*

32 Editorial
What good news?—*Everett J. Thomas*

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

Cover: Photo provided by Mennonite Mission Network

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Expand Christian Peacemaker Teams?

Regarding "Expand CPT" in the Oct. 7 issue: I have a number of concerns about Ron Sider's proposal to invest massive resources in "expand[ing] CPT a hundredfold, then a thousandfold."

First, Sider advances as a rationale and precedent for expanding CPT the nonviolent successes of Gandhi in India, Martin Luther King and African-Americans in the United States and Solidarity in Poland. These are truly inspiring stories. They are also examples of indigenous movements arising from decades or centuries of oppression under indigenous leaders who were among the peace geniuses of the 20th century. As such, these examples have little or no connection with Sider's idea of jetting large numbers of people around the world to make short-term interventions. CPT work requires a different rationale.

Second, Sider concludes that unless we invest "tens of millions of dollars" in his proposed expansion, "Christian rhetoric about war—both pacifist and just war—will be both hypocritical and dishonest. It's time to live what we preach." This is not true, and I hate to see CPT saddled with such grandiose claims.

There are many ways to live what we preach in terms of peace. Like many other approaches to peace work, CPT is valuable but limited, and it makes no sense to privilege CPT over the others. Just this single issue of *The Mennonite* mentions or alludes to other peace work worthy of support. Michael J. Sharp writes a challenging article about the Military Counseling Network that works with soldiers who are becoming conscientious objectors. Visitors to the Philippines offer a glimpse of the highly creative, front-line Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute. In reporting the false and possibly life-threatening accusation of collusion with guerrillas against Colombian Mennonites, Hector Mondragon, a Mennonite, reminds us of the brave and persistent peace witness of Colombian Mennonites generally and their peace organization, Justapaz, in particular.

I'm all for expanding our peace witness dramatically. If that conviction is shared, let's do it thoughtfully, taking into consideration all the wonderful work being done in the United States and by our brothers and sisters around the world.—*Joe Liechty, Goshen, Ind.*

I appreciate Ron Sider's call for expansion of Christian Peacemaker Teams (Oct. 7), but I worry that his article implies using nonviolence as a "technique" that "works" and promotes a shallow, paternalistic kind of peacemaking.

CPT offers a supportive relationship to suffering people rather than techniques. CPT workers try to understand needs and doing what those suffering injustice think will help them. Often angry, oppressed people are far from wanting a nonviolent approach outsiders recommend. So CPT offers a relationship (often protective) that can empower people not to hate and seek solutions rather than paternalistically imposing solutions or offering a technique to defeat the other side. Humility helps.

If outsiders offer merely techniques, local people could say, "Why don't you know-it-all folks take those techniques home and change your own government, which supports this injustice?" CPT has credibility in that participants have spoken prophetically to their own culture in dramatic ways. They also arrange for two-week delegations to educate outsiders on what kind of witness is needed back home.

CPT should not be used as a quick fix by those feeling guilt at the slaughter and injustices our nation has helped cause. CPT defines success in a deeper way and invites a patriotism that is prophetic. This makes CPT less marketable to the 100s or 1,000s Sider envisions are desperately needed. —*Stan Bohn, North Newton, Kan.*

I find Ron Sider's call to expand CPT to be right on. While inclusion of just-war Christians may seem problematic, I think it could be the sort of thing that wins them over to the way of peace. While Sider may be a dreamer (Are church leaders really ready to lay down their lives?), his call to spiritual arms is much needed and needs to be repeated. If the peace churches of the West gave up their comfortable affluence in favor of radical discipleship, there wouldn't be a need for confer-

IN THIS ISSUE

November is Mission Month in Mennonite Church USA, and once again we invited Mennonite Mission Network to provide articles that offer a fresh glimpse of mission work today. Our cover story (page 8) explains why generations of the Eash family have made it a practice to give their time in service. "One of the most important things mission brings to congregational life is a sense of perspective on life beyond our own little group of people that gathers on Sunday to worship," says Brent Eash. Stanley Green, executive director of Mennonite Mission Network, reminds us that we are "Mennonite by witness, not by family name" (page 18). Mennonite Church USA executive director Jim Schrag calls us to "add words to deeds" in his column (page 2). News includes details of Al Geiser's rescue in Afghanistan (page 6) and new efforts at racial healing in the church (page 19).—*Editor* ences on church growth. It's a simple, age-old formula: The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. And it really doesn't take that many martyrs. A little blood goes a long way. But the seed needs to be willing to fall to the ground. That's a tough choice for any of us.—*David Dietz, York, Pa.*

I applaud Ron Sider's desire for more Mennonites to be peacemakers by being in solidarity with people around the world who are caught in violence ("Expand CPT," Oct. 7). However, I take issue with his tactics. Essentially Sider advocates Mennonite leaders inserting themselves into Christian Peacemaker Teams to give it more funds and participants. He also advocates changing CPT's philosophy and theology to fit the Mennonite church, even though he advocates CPT staying ecumenical. Publically advocating taking over CPT without making any indication that CPT would welcome this change and insisting that certain current policies of CPT would need to change perpetuates the violence that Sider speaks against. I assume there are several points of tension that he has with CPT's policies and theology. But he picks out the practice of CPT being "pro-gay" as one that needs to change. This discounts and shuts out the amazing witness that some CPT workers have been for peace simply because they are gay or lesbian. Violence is perpetuated not just with guns but with words, policies and a lack of tolerance.—*Emily North, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Ron Sider (Oct. 7) calls for an expansion of Christian Peacemaker Teams' efforts in coming years, both in the church and beyond, enlisting just-war Christians as well as pacifists. This inclusive approach—not demanding that only pacifists be involved—is countered by his call for CPT to abandon its pro-gay rights stand if it expects to get mainstream church backing for its work. Inclusiveness apparently has its limits.—*Paul Hershberger, Goshen, Ind.*

No effect on abortion rate

Republicans claim to be antiabortion. This raises a question in my mind: When we had a Republican president and Republicans in control of Congress, why weren't abortions made unlawful? Also abortions should have decreased. But abortions actually increased during the last eight years. It appears that electing people who are opposed to abortions has no affect on the abortion rate. So we need to vote on some other basis than what the candidate believes about abortion.—*Mervin Swartzentruber, Goshen, Ind.*

Theology should inform politics

During this election season it is important that potential Mennonite voters allow their theology to inform their politics and not the other way around. A review of Jesus' teaching would be good background material before casting a vote.—*Randall J. Bowman, Archbold, Ohio*

Picking a political party

When I decided which party to join, I asked myself these questions: Which party better represents the issues I care about, such as helping the poor, the powerless and the disenfranchised? Which party will be more willing to negotiate with enemies and not jump into an unneeded war? Which party follows more closely what I interpret as Jesus' teachings? I hope that all Mennonites will ask themselves these questions and follow their hearts while being respectful of those who end up on the other side of the fence.—*Rebecca Bare, Champaign, Ill.*

Halo teaches killology

I would like to help Travis Duerksen "weigh the morals" as he promises to do in the column he wrote called "Why Mennonites Play Halo" (Speaking Out, Oct. 7). Travis may be interested to know about a science of learning to kill, called "killology." According to David Grossman, who

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

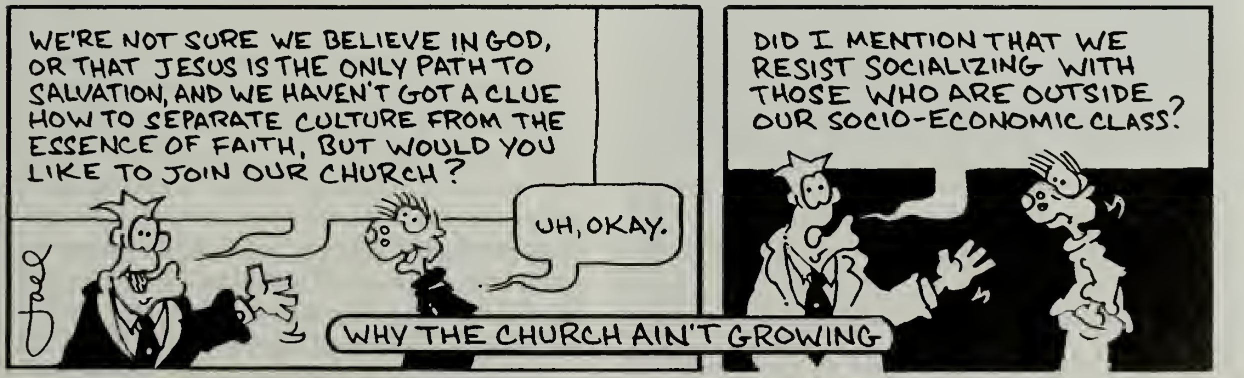
My congregation supports (has contact with) at least one mission worker: (39 votes)

○ Yes (59%)
○ No (26%)
○ Not sure (15%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Readers Say letters continue on page 31.

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


WE'RE NOT SURE WE BELIEVE IN GOD, OR THAT JESUS IS THE ONLY PATH TO SALVATION, AND WE HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE HOW TO SEPARATE CULTURE FROM THE ESSENCE OF FAITH, BUT WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN OUR CHURCH?
UH, OKAY.
DID I MENTION THAT WE RESIST SOCIALIZING WITH THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE OUR SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS?
WHY THE CHURCH AIN'T GROWING
Joel

IN BRIEF

Bethel College tennis player fourth in nation

Paige McKinney, Newton, Kan., a senior at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., finished fourth at the ITA/NAIA National Small College Tennis Championships Oct. 16-19 in Mobile, Ala. She qualified for the tournament by winning the ITA West-Central Regional Sept. 28 in Topeka, Kan. After entering the tournament unseeded, she defeated the #2 seed 4-6, 6-2, 7-5. In the semifinals, she lost to the #3 seed Ardila 3-6, 6-3, 6-3, then lost to the #4 seed 7-5, 6-0.—*Bethel College*

Presbyterians fasting monthly

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is inviting its members to participate in a monthly churchwide fast for "repentance, reflection and coordinated actions" to empathize with those suffering from hunger and famine around the world. Over the next year, the denomination will study aspects of the world hunger crisis, including trade policies, climate change and the rising cost of food. It will release its findings along with scriptural studies during each fasting period.—*The Christian Century*

Kidnapped businessman freed after 56 days

PITTSBURGH—Al Geiser's plan to install the biggest turbine locally manufactured for rural Afghanistan was interrupted in August when he was captured by armed men and held for 56 days.

Al and Gladys Geiser of Kidron, Ohio, had worked in Afghanistan since 2000—Al developing grass-roots hydroelectric projects and Gladys teaching in a Kabul school.

On Oct. 26, the Geisers shared their faith stories during the worship service at their home congregation, Kidron Mennonite Church.

"That day in August, all that we had done was put on hold," Gladys said to the congregation. On Aug. 20, Al and his business partner, Shukur, were returning to Kabul from a funeral in a nearby village when they were captured by armed men.

Gladys said she guessed Al was somewhere hidden in the mountains. "But I knew God was there with him," she added. Gladys learned of Al's rescue on Oct. 14.

The Associated Press reported Oct. 22 that "U.S. Special Forces soldiers freed a kidnapped American … during a nighttime mission [the previous] week—a rare hostage rescue in a country where ransom abductions have become increasingly common." The rescue mission killed several insurgents, U.S. officials said. (*The Mennonite* has learned from several sources that Al Geiser is the unnamed subject of the Associated Press report.)

On the sixth day, the captors performed a "last rite," and Al feared for his life, but nothing happened. Another cold night, he complained of the cold, but a guard reassured him that the next night he would be "in a place of immense warmth," meaning the end of his life.

"I faced death, and that's OK," Al said. "It's the unknown and waiting that's hard."

The captors set a price for Shukur. He was released after payment was made, one week after their capture. But for the next 47 days, Al lay hidden among the rocks in the mountains. The guards forced him to lie down all day and all night on a plot of earth the size of his torso, his feet extended over a pile of rocks. He was blindfolded except for eating and trips to relieve himself.

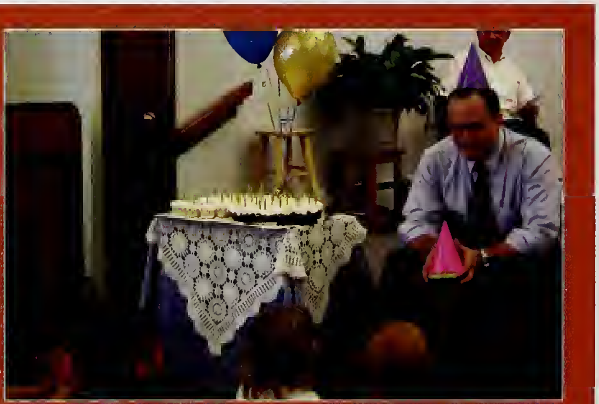
Al Geiser

When Al felt stress, he recited the Lord's Prayer with his prayer beads. Although his captors told him no one knew or cared where he was, Al found hope in this: his health that did not require medication, no physical harm, the ability to sleep three to four hours each night and his diet of bread and water—and some rice toward the end—causing him to lose 30 pounds. Al said many villagers make do with only bread and water.

After 52 days, the guards packed up to return down the mountain, mistakenly thinking someone had paid Al's ransom. When they learned of their mistake, they moved him indoors to keep him through the winter.

Several nights later, Al said, he heard a knock on the door and voices speaking English. Al said he was returned to Kabul "safe and sound, thanking God for my life." He returned to the United States on Oct. 20.

Gladys said on Oct. 27 there was no ransom paid for Al. "God knew my heart and soul and was able to understand even my most demanding cries," said Gladys. "I felt much peace through this ordeal; peace that came from God."—*Anna Groff, with reports from the Associated Press (for a longer version of this story, go to www.themennonite.org)*



Leroy Saner

Hively celebrates 50th anniversary

Rich Preheim, congregational historian, gives the Sunday-morning children's story, complete with cake and party hats, on Oct. 5 as Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., celebrates its 50th anniversary. The Sunday morning service drew about 130 people.

First woman ordained in Lancaster Conference

PHILADELPHIA—The Aug. 3 ordination of Lynn Parks at Oxford Circle Mennonite Church in Philadelphia is the first official Lancaster Mennonite Conference ordination of a woman.

After a long discernment period, the Bishop Board, which oversees all conference credentialing activities, decided in May to allow diversity within the conference on the ordination of women. Prior to Parks' ordination, bishop Linford King had performed two ordinations in the Lancaster District, Elizabeth Nissley of James Street Mennonite in June 2007 and Janet Breneman of Laurel Street Mennonite in January.

Parks joins these and a growing number of

CPT photo

ttlers attack photographer, CPT worker

ristian Peacemaker Teams worker Jan Benvie tries to get a
olen camera from an Israeli settler (just before he punched
r in the face). On Oct. 18, four Israeli settlers beat up a
lestinian reporter, Abed Hashlamoun, near Hebron. He
quired hospital treatment for his injuries. Hashlamoun had
en photographing Palestinians, Israelis and internationals
rvesting olives together in an event organized by landown-
s. Hashlamoun was walking alone through the olive groves
hen male settlers knocked him to the ground and beat and
cked him. Several olive pickers heard his cries and ran to help
m. One of the settlers seized Hashlamoun's camera. Benvie
proached the settler and asked him to return the camera, but
did not respond. When Benvie took hold of the camera strap
e young man punched her in the face, knocking her to the
ound. He then hurled the camera into the rocky field below.
e settlers were still nearby when Israeli soldiers arrived. "I
peatedly asked the soldiers to detain the men who attacked
but instead they permitted the attackers to leave the scene,"
d Benvie. The Israeli military declared the area a closed mili-
y zone, ordered an end to the olive picking and made the
aeli and international olive pickers leave the area.—*CPT*

other women being ordained or transferring their ordination credentials from other conferences.

Philadelphia bishop Freeman Miller officiated over the ordination. "As I have watched her preach, teach, counsel, guide and equip many at Oxford Circle for effective life and witness, my appreciation for her skilled leadership has grown steadily every year," said Miller.

In eight years of ministry at Oxford Circle, Parks has seen the multiracial congregation double in size and become increasingly involved in community outreach.

Oxford Circle senior pastor Leonard Dow led the service, which included statements of affirmation from fellow ministers and members of the congregation.—*Peter M. Sensenig*

Communication, development director named

NEWTON, Kan.—Marty Lehman has been named director of communications and development for Mennonite Church USA, effective Nov. 1. Lehman will oversee communications and development work in Executive Leadership and provide leadership for collaborative efforts in communication and development throughout the denomination. After the 2009 convention in Columbus, Ohio, she will also give leadership to convention planning staff. Churchwide agency executive directors have affirmed Lehman for this new role.

Marathana Prothro will continue to provide key leadership in communications, and she and Lehman will continue putting together staff teams in communication and development on behalf of the denomination.—*Mennonite Church USA*

Franconia Conference pastor loses credentials

CHICAGO—Franconia Conference of Mennonite Church USA took away the credentials of pastor Michael Schaadt of Alpha (N.J.) Mennonite Church, effective Oct. 15, because Schaadt, who is gay, told the conference he could no longer commit to celibacy.

Ertell Whigham, director of congregational resourcing and equipping for Franconia Conference, says he worked with Schaadt over a five-year period. "It has been painful and difficult for us as a staff as well as for Mike and the congregation," Whigham says of removing Schaadt's credentials.

When Schaadt transferred his credentials to Franconia, he was open about his sexuality and his participation in ministries that describe themselves as healing gay men and lesbians of their homosexuality. The agreement was that Schaadt would be celibate, Whigham says.

About a year ago, Schaadt told the conference his understanding of his sexuality had changed. "For me it came down to a question of integrity," Schaadt says. "I had to be honest to say healing wasn't taking place."

At least not the healing he expected of a change in his sexual orientation, he says. "I do now describe myself as a healed homosexual, but the healing has come through accepting myself for who I am," he says.

Franconia is still determining how it would respond if Alpha Mennonite chose to welcome noncelibate gay and lesbian members, Whigham says. Conference staff are talking to other conferences about how they handle the question, he says.

Schaadt says he encouraged the congregation to make a decision independent of him, and they have set a deadline of Jan. 31, 2009.

Schaadt and Whigham say their discussions, and those with the congregation, demonstrated openness, trust and a spirit of agreeing to disagree in love.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

—compiled by Gordon Houser

IN BRIEF

Hoover named CEO of Kings View

The Kings View Corp. Board of Directors has named Leon Hoover CEO. Hoover will begin his new position Dec. 1. Mennonite Health Services Alliance assisted the Kings View board with the CEO search. Hoover succeeds Frank Duerksen, who will continue his role of CEO through Nov. 30. Hoover has worked for MMA (Mennonite Mutual Aid) and Philhaven (a sister behavioral health organization to Kings View). *—Mennonite Health Services Alliance*

Mothers no, fathers yes

- Percentage of women recommended for hire based on resumés created by researchers for a recent study: 84
- Percentage of women recommended for hire when otherwise identical resumés indicated they were mothers: 46.8
- Percentage of men recommended for hire based on resumés created by researchers for a recent study: 61.7
- Percentage of men recommended for hire when otherwise identical resumés indicated they were fathers: 73.4—*Yes! magazine*

Photo provided

Across borders: Hannah Eash and a friend celebrate with confetti inside a plastic egg at San Antonio Mennonite Church during an Easter celebration.

A culture

Mission connects people across borders and oceans.

by Hannah Heinzekehr

Ted Eash remembers the event well. As a pastor, he often received news about accidents; this one was no different. Several weeks earlier, a member of his congregation, a farmer, was forced to swerve his truck. The truck flipped, injuring him and damaging the truck beyond repair. Even after weeks of recovery time, the man was still unable to complete his regular farm duties or begin preparing for the fall harvest.

The family was struggling.

But when Ted's mind wanders back to that autumn, it is not the accident that stands out. One day, while sitting at home, Ted's oldest son, Brent, approached. The preteen had just one thing to say.

"Well Dad," said Brent, "I hope they know that the rest of us will come and help him."

For Ted, this moment illustrates how a culture for mission is created.

"I think some of this stuff gets caught rather than taught. I didn't talk to Brent about going over there, but it just seemed to be the thing to do for him," he says.

The Eash family did help out in the wake of the accident, and later, when a farming crisis in the mid-1980s left many local families in a financial hole, the Eash family found new ways to walk alongside them.

By extending beyond themselves, three generations of Eashes link to faithful followers joining the work of Jesus across the globe.

TheMennonite

800-790-2498
www.themennonite.org

TheMennonite

800-790-2498
www.themennonite.org

for mission

"I was part of a support group in which three of us pastors and a person from Oaklawn [a mental health agency in Goshen, Ind.] held meetings Sunday afternoons for these farm families so they could have a forum where they could help each other," says Ted. "But there was always the kind of individual helping where I and the boys could go and help clean up buildings and get the machinery out and the livestock in shape to sell at the auction so they could disperse and move on with their lives."

Today, the walls of Ted and Darlene Eash's home are lined with family portraits. Photos of their children on their wedding days, grandchildren graduating and the family gathered together.

Many members of the family still live close by, within a few square miles of each other in northern Indiana.

Their mission extends far beyond.

Generation to generation, shore to shore: Through voluntary service work, the Eashes have connected with congregations and people throughout the United States. And the connections don't end at the border. By extending beyond themselves, three generations of Eashes link to faithful followers joining the work of Jesus across the globe.

In the last seven years, Ted and Darlene Eash, members of Forks Mennonite Church in Middlebury, Ind., have served each winter with the SOOP program—a partnership among Mennonite Association of Retired Persons, Mennonite Central Committee Canada and Mennonite Mission Network. They have spent their winter months serving alongside individuals in Phoenix, Ariz., Hazard, Ky., Albuquerque, N.M., Americus, Ga., and Waco, Texas.

The Eashes built relationships with diverse people and broadened their perceptions of the kingdom of God. Ted and Darlene also invited many friends and family members to consider serving through SOOP as well.

It's almost like if I don't do it or if I don't avail myself of the opportunity to serve I'm not being faithful in following Jesus.

—Ted Eash

"It's almost like if I don't do it or if I don't avail myself of the opportunity to serve I'm not being faithful in following Jesus. It's the way I feel because of the benefits I receive from it as well as the opportunities to serve," says Ted.

And the call to a missional lifestyle that Brent Eash picked up on years ago still resonates within his own work today. Brent, a pastor at Shore Mennonite Church in Shipshewana, Ind., works with the congregation to seek a variety of mission opportunities outside worship.

Shore, which sits near a small lake outside Shipshewana, has long supported mission workers Steve and Betsy Dintaman, who serve through Mennonite Mission Network and Eastern Mennonite Missions in Lithuania, on the Baltic Sea. Members of the congregation pray for the Dintamans, send letters of encouragement

Continued on page 10

iebe-Johnson

Connections across oceans: From left, Theophius Tettah, Bonaventure Akowaonu and Bruce Yoder pray.

Continued from page 9

and provide financial support for their ministry abroad. Steve grew up at Shore, and members take a special interest in his teaching work at LCC International University.

The Dintamans visit Shore when they return to the United States and share stories from their ministry while abroad. This connection enables the Dintamans to serve and the Shore congregation to expand ministry beyond their local community.

"Steve is somebody who connects well with people, and every time they come back and talk about their work people get excited about it and love to hear the stories," says Brent. "It's the personal connection that is important for that relationship."

Brent's connection with mission also expands to his home. He and Heidi, his wife, are parents to four young adults. Three have served for a year or more through Mission Network service programs.

Hearing the volunteers' stories of service and having those brought back to the congregation strengthens us to go out and serve.—Rachel Epp Miller

Northern Indiana to San Antonio: A year ago, the reach of the Eashes and the congregation extended south. After a year in Mennonite Mission Network's Service Adventure and four years of Spanish and peace, justice and conflict studies at Goshen College, Brent and Heidi's daughter Hannah chose a second year of service with the Mission Network's Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) unit in San Antonio, Texas.

"My parents and my grandparents and my family are compassionate people, and that impacted me growing up, as far as trying to look beyond what's immediately around me to the wider community or the country or the world," says Hannah.

Hannah serves at RAICES (Refugee Immigration Center for Education and Legal Services). She works alongside staff members to help individuals file petitions for relatives and to take on adjustment of status cases for people wanting to become residents or citizens in the United States. Hannah is also being trained in family-based immigration law so that she can begin taking on her own cases.

San Antonio Mennonite Church (SAMC) supports the MVS unit where Eash lives with two other volunteers. The congregation pairs each volunteer with a mentor family. MVS workers are invited for meals at church members' homes and to activities throughout the city.

The congregation views the unit as an extension of their congregational mission within their local community.

"Hearing the volunteers' stories of service and having those brought back to the congregation strengthens us to go out and serve. That connection's pretty vital to who we are as a congregation," says Rachel Epp Miller, pastor at SAMC.

San Antonio to Benin: Thirty years after their parents collected change for global mission work in tin globe banks, children at SAMC brought their own pennies, nickels and dimes to worship in blue plastic globe banks. The money supported an orphanage in Benin.

Through mission banks, SAMC intentionally expanded its own community to include mission workers abroad and international partners.

In 2006, using mission bank teaching tools, the congregation began a six-week worship series in which they told stories from Benin and gathered money to support La Casa Grande (The Big House), an orphanage started as a mission outreach of Burgos (Spain) Mennonite Church, attended by mission workers Connie and Dennis Byler.

But the Texans wanted a relationship with people in Benin that went beyond monetary support. Together, the congregation created a simple black banner.

"We traced one another's hands on that banner as a symbol then for the community in Benin that many hands are one also. Trying to create a connection there that our hands are doing things here in San Antonio and recognizing that their hands are doing the work of God also in Benin," says Epp Miller.

The congregation sent the banner, as well as personal messages on postcards with pictures of the church building, to workers Nancy Frey and Bruce Yoder, who gave them to children at La Casa Grande. In return, adults and children at La Casa Grande sent photos and messages introducing themselves back to SAMC.

Bruce Yoder, MMN 2007

La Casa Grande orphanage: Gloria, Nathan, Moise, Abigale and Stanislas examine toys sent by children inspired to share by the stories they heard in Sunday school.

Benin to Martinsburg, Pa.: Since second grade, Bruce Yoder has been a member of Martinsburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church. The congregation walked with him through college and through mission work in the Dominican Republic. And now during nine years of ministry in Benin, Martinsburg members continue to support Bruce and to claim his family's ministry as their own.

Nancy Frey and Bruce Yoder have served through Mission Network since 1999 with their children, Jeremiah and Deborah. Through work at Benin Bible Institute, a school that provides leadership and biblical training for Beninese church leaders, Bruce and Nancy are in contact with people from more than 60 denominations. Bruce serves as a teacher and provides resources for partners in Benin, Ghana and Nigeria. Nancy splits her time between administration and teaching.

In turn, the family is supported by five different North American congregations, including Martinsburg. Martinsburg has provided prayer and financial support, and has played a vital role in offering encouragement.

The last time Bruce visited Martinsburg, he brought along Elder Sunday Eka, the secretary of the Nigerian Mennonite Church.

"We felt more connected because of talking to someone that Bruce was relating to. It gave us a new picture of what Bruce was really doing," says Bob Yoder, a member of Martinsburg and Bruce's father. "And as Elder Sunday Eka shared those things, I think he hit a chord with the congregation. Now the congregation is interested in getting some kind of support to the Nigeria Mennonite Church."

From Pennsylvania and beyond: Mission work in local communities, throughout North America and around the world connects individuals and congregations to kingdom work that extends beyond themselves.

> **One of the most important things mission brings to congregational life is a sense of perspective on life beyond our own little group of people that gathers on Sunday to worship.**
> —Brent Eash

"One of the most important things mission brings to congregational life is a sense of perspective on life beyond our own little group of people that gathers on Sunday to worship," says Brent Eash. "As important as that is, there's a lot going on in the world, and mission is one of the ways we connect with that."

Together, congregations and individuals can help build God's kingdom one relationship at a time.

Hannah Heinzekehr is congregational resource coordinator and assistant news editor for Mennonite Mission Network.

Lived-out love

by Barthélémy Dossou Bodjrenou and Raphaël Edou with Mennonite Mission Network staff

Christ's love is the comprehensive answer to human problems, but that all-encompassing compassion must be incarnated through small acts of faith.

The tiny egg that became Bethesda Health-Care Center hatched during dark times in a nest of economic and political chaos. In 1989, people were desperate, and the West African nation of Benin teetered on the brink of an uncertain future as it moved from Marxism to democracy. The national health system, along with other government services, no longer functioned due the nonpayment of salaries for more than a year.

Medical personnel set up offices in their homes, but charged fees that were impossible for most of the population to pay. Recent graduates of Benin's prestigious medical school were unemployed because they did not have the capital to set up practice.

Bethesda is founded on God's grace and God's principles that discourage corruption in administration and motivate people to work for reasons beyond their salaries.

Benin's churches served as the incubator that brought warmth and life to the struggling population. The churches, whose members had been persecuted during a period of the Marxist regime, were perhaps the only functioning institutions—and were ready to respond to the overwhelming need around them.

Already, in 1987, more than 30 denominations—together with four Mennonite Board of Missions* workers from Canada, France and the United States—joined hands to study the Bible together and put their faith into action. Although the churches were not able to agree on all doctrinal issues, they could agree that healing is an important aspect of God's salvation.

From these humble beginnings, working with a few thousand marginalized people living on heaps of garbage, has grown a holistic program that promotes comprehensive well-being in 14 urban areas of Benin and in six village clusters. It has also been replicated in other West African countries. Bethesda hospital treats 100,000 patients each year. The community bank serves 10,000 clients and 10,000 beneficiaries are enrolled in the mutual aid program. Starting with local resources and a $1,000 gift given by Mennonite Board of Missions, Bethesda now has a budget of $2,401,691.

Bethesda's success lies in its small beginning and its step-by-step growth. Another important factor is Bethesda's foundation on God's grace and God's principles that discourage corruption in administration and motivate people to work for reasons beyond their salaries.

Early leaders established a health commission that mobilized quickly to set up Bethesda Health-Care Center in a few rented rooms in one of the most destitute areas of the country's largest city, Cotonou, where people had filled in swamps with garbage in order to build improvised shelters. Newly trained and unemployed doctors, motivated by love for God and their neighbors, agreed to staff the clinic without pay. Patients paid about 30 cents for treatment at Bethesda.

Within several months—due to multitudes that came for consultations, careful financial management and subsidized drugs—the health center was able to begin paying staff salaries.

Bethesda has become one of the best health institutions in Benin. It grew to require four rented buildings to house its services before a German development agency, funded by the Protestant Churches of Germany, joined Bethesda to build the present-day hospital.

As Bethesda's doctors and nurses learned to know their patients, they became concerned by the realization that they were treating the same people for the same illnesses over and over. It seemed the health workers were continually leaping into a raging river to rescue drowning victims, and they were exhausted. Medical personnel decided their energy might be better spent if they attacked the source of the problem and directed some of their energy at preventing people from falling into the swirling waters of disease.

In 1993, with prevention in mind, Bethesda gave birth to a community development department that expressed more fully the health center's vision: to promote physical, mental, social and spiritual health through curative and preventive actions and to fight against poverty. (See box on page 14.)

Before any changes were implemented, however, more than a year was consecrated to raising community awareness of the problems resulting

Local and global partnerships create a miracle in Benin.

from the unhygienic conditions of the environment in which people lived. Parasites that caused gastrointestinal tract infections and malaria flourished in the garbage-packed swamp waters around Bethesda.

We raised awareness through health education in the form of songs, theater and dialogue with health professionals. Groups traditionally excluded from decision-making—women, youth and children—were empowered through gatherings that took place in markets and schoolrooms. Then, all sectors of the community gathered to learn experientially about the importance of every member of society and how the gifts of all were needed for sustainable development.

Once the community understood the root of their illness and the power that could be theirs if they worked in unity, they organized their own community development association to clean up their environment.

During the year the community was organizing, Bethesda's community development department personnel also visited governmental officials and international aid agencies to raise their awareness of the grass-roots initiatives taking place.

A French development agency—impressed by Bethesda's reputation in the realm of curative medicine, by the thorough work of the community and by the promising holistic strategy—agreed to contribute funds to a garbage-collection and recycling program. The program created jobs for metal workers, farmers, market women and unskilled young men, who had little but the strength of their arms. The metal workers built two-wheel carts that the young men pushed from door-to-door to collect the garbage that had previously been thrown into the swamps.

After sorting the trash, farmers used compost made from the biodegradable components of the garbage (40 percent) to grow organic vegetables and fruit sold by market women. Other products were made from other elements of the recycled garbage, such as electrical tubing from the plastics or cooking logs made from compressed paper.

Despite the success of the initiative, there was still an important element missing. The economic aspect needed to be expanded. They learned this unforgettable lesson painfully.

Two weeks after graduating from a health-training series, the woman who had best demonstrated that she understood the building blocks necessary for health lost her toddler to malnutrition. This woman knew what foods to feed her children, she simply could not afford them. This woman's experience is repeated many times daily throughout our country.

Mimi Hollinger-Janzen

Victor Gbedo, Bethesda environmental project director, displays a roll of tubing made from recycled plastic. The women to his left are a part of his staff.

Once the community understood the root of their illness and the power that could be theirs if they worked in unity, they organized their own community development association to clean up their environment.

The community bank was created in 1996, through which the savings of the more comfortable members of society become loans to help poor families launch small businesses. Financial management coaches guide the first-time entrepreneurs. Last year, the bank loaned about $2 million.

The most recent innovation is a mutual aid health association in which people deposit a small monthly sum that assures medical care when sickness strikes. This was begun in 2006.

The community development-garbage valorization project has been awarded three international prizes; a United Nations-Habitat award for one of the 10 best practices in the world in 2002, first place in the "Japanese award for the most innovative

Continued on page 14

From left, Victor Djagba and Raphael Edou of Bethesda Health Centre in Benin.

Liu Jie, MMN 2007

Continued from page 13

development project" in 2006 and, in 2006, the African Social Award. However, two of the most significant recognitions were the "Healthiest Neighborhood" prizes awarded by the city of Cotonou in 1995 and 1999 to the community that had formerly lived on the garbage piles.

Churches laid the foundation for this ministry through their understanding of the holistic nature of the missionary call. Pastors were important members of Bethesda's first administrative councils and continue to be involved as chaplains who lead morning prayers for the personnel, pray with the sick and walk with families living with HIV/AIDS.

Recognizing God's gifts to all people helps encourage local people to realize that their future lies in their own hands. They have the innate skills that just need to be awakened. Bethesda's policy of offering healing to all people without consideration of race, religion or political orientation also opens the door to work with a wide variety of partners, including both governmental and church agencies.

We thank God for the witness of Mennonite mission work in West Africa. Not only have the local populations been blessed, but ambassadors from countries such as the United States and Germany and the vice president of the World Bank have seen the powerful hand of God at work when they visit Bethesda Health-Care Center.

Recognizing God's gifts to all people helps encourage local people to realize that their future lies in their own hands.

Despite all the progress, we are still obligated to turn people away due to our limited capacity. The needs of our people are so great that we need to continue growing.

Barthélémy Dossou Bodjrenou has been head doctor of Bethesda Health-Care Center since its beginning. His speciality is ophthalmology, including cataract surgery. He received his training in Benin, Mali and France. He is a lay preacher and leader in the Methodist Church. Marcelle, his wife, is an economist. Raphaël Edou graduated as an agricultural engineer from the University of Benin. He developed Bethesda's community health program and served as its administrator until 2005, when he became administrator of all Bethesda's programs. He also serves a municipal counselor of Cotonou. Deborah, his wife, works as a marketing and partnership consultant and is coordinator of Africa Perspectives, a not-for-profit organization that promotes job creation. They have three children. He is a member of the Assemblies of God Church and serves as leader of children's ministries.

Bethesda Health-Care Center offers:

- Social services and family planning
- General medical care
- Laboratory
- Radiology
- Cardiology
- Full range of eye care including cataract surgery
- Maternity
- Dental services
- Pharmacy
- Psychological and spiritual care

Bethesda's community development department offers:

- Training in community awareness-raising and empowerment
- Training in community governance
- Health education
- Garbage-collecting and recycling

Bethesda's community bank department offers:

- Self-managed village savings
- Loans for launching small businesses and home improvement
- Business management training
- Training in income management

---

* Mennonite Board of Missions was a predecessor agency of Mennonite Mission Network

More than lectures

LCC International University is born into blessings out of the Soviet rubble.

by Steve Dintaman

This September, a record first-year class of 208 students enrolled at LCC International University in Klaipeda, Lithuania. This brings the current enrollment to 640 students representing 20 different countries.

LCC was founded in 1991 as the Soviet Union was crumbling. Believers from Lithuania and North America responded to an invitation from the newly formed Lithuanian government to start a Western-style Christian university. Though Mennonites were active in its beginnings and continue to serve in leadership and teaching roles, LCC is a cooperative enterprise that involves contributions from believers of many different churches.

LCC offers accredited bachelor's degrees in business administration, English, theology and psychology and has a master's level program in teaching English as a foreign language. About half our students come from Lithuania, with a growing number from Belarus, Ukraine, Russia and Moldova. There are also students from Africa, Albania and the central Asian republics. Most of the Lithuanians are Roman Catholic. There are also a large number of Russian Orthodox. About 20-25 percent of our students come from evangelical churches.

While LCC is a Christian mission and requires students to take courses in Bible, theology and ethics, we do not require students to make a Christian confession in order to enter. Many of our students have little exposure to Christian faith. Some are indifferent or even hostile to religious beliefs.

The liberal arts model of education is not a part of most European universities. But what students notice most is the difference in how their instructors treat them.

One Ukrainian student remarked that she was surprised to find that professors actually talk to their students outside the classroom. We use an interactive style of teaching that encourages students to express their thoughts in class and we seek to model Christian community in our teaching and community life.

For many of our students the experience of this kind of community is something profoundly new.

You might say that this treatment, and the many learnings that result, are significant parts of our mission.

LCC transforms lives

The word transformation is overused today, but it's what we deal in. Our mission statement says we seek to offer a Christian liberal arts education, "that transforms students for servant leadership." These are not just words. It happens.

I see students transformed at LCC in four different ways.

1. Students who go through our program are changed.

I see students becoming more positive and hopeful. They learn to relate to people in a different way. They all have been exposed to people and a community that believes that a life of integrity is not inconsistent with being successful. Over four years of exposure, our students are thoroughly "salted" by the gospel; the leavening of Christian values and the fruit of the Spirit get mixed into how they operate as people. LCC seeks to model and teach concepts such as servant leadership, the importance of a life of active service, peacemaking, integrity and treating all people with respect.

In their time at LCC, students get to enjoy and taste the fruits of the gospel. These fruits in and of

Continued on page 16

Ryan Miller

Interactive style: Steve Dintaman (left) talks with a group of students at LCC International University in Klaipéda, Lithuania.

Continued from page 15

themselves energize and change students. Some students will seek out the root from which these fruits grow. Others will simply enjoy the fruits. We hear all the time from our graduates how much their time at LCC changed their personalities and the way they operate in the world.

2. Students who came as nominal believers become active participants in the lives of their churches.

In my Intro to Theology class (required of all third-year students), one of the key ideas I present is of church as a community of believers actively engaged in service in the world. I ask what the other people who are worshiping with them mean to their faith. I always get the same answer: "Absolutely nothing." One student recently amplified that response: "They mean the same thing as the other people in the grocery store do."

We teach and model the idea that community and service are integral dimensions of our worship of God. We do not seek to convert our students to our form of Christian faith. We are happy if Roman Catholics or Russian Orthodox become active members of their own fellowships. Once Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox leaders found that we were not here to "steal sheep" but to encourage students in their walk with God, they became surprisingly supportive of our presence.

3. Students who come as believers leave with their faith commitments deepened and expanded.

In the classroom, I seek to demonstrate respect for each of the traditions I teach about. I encourage students to think critically about their churches and seek out the best in those traditions. It is gratifying to see Catholics and Baptists, Orthodox and Pentecostals learning about each other's faith and forming friendships and fellowship that transcends these divides.

It is my calling to plant Anabaptist seeds about the church as community and the Christian life as a life of service and peacemaking into their understanding of the faith.

As an Anabaptist teaching in a setting where most of our students come from other traditions, I feel it is my calling to plant Anabaptist seeds about the church as community and the Christian life as a life of service and peacemaking into their understanding of the faith.

I want our students to leave LCC more aware of the needs of the world and of Christ's call to peacemaking and service.

Students who become believers
drawn to the kind of life they see

Ryan Miller

Planting seeds: Steve Dintaman (right) talks with LCC Internati

4. Some students become believers.

One North American who taught a summer term class at LCC lamented that he hadn't done more to reach students for Christ. He thought he should have offered a Bible study. One of our graduates, now employed by LCC, said, "I have news for you—students wouldn't come to your Bible study. Those of us who became believers during our time at LCC did so because of how our teachers treated us."

While teaching about missions in a theology class, I once asked students if they thought LCC was a good example of Christian mission. One evangelical student said he thought not: We do not overtly try to convert students.

Another student, who had consistently given me a hard time in class, cut him off. "LCC is a perfect model of Christian mission," he said. "We all know why you are here and what you stand for, but we also know we can take what we want and leave what we don't want."

Students who become believers while at LCC do so mostly because they have been drawn to the kind of life they see lived out among our faculty and Christian students.

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

AMBS window

Fall 2008
Volume 19 Issue 1

2 Participants reflect breadth of the church
3 Projects support pastors, foster collaboration
4 President's Window
Alumni News

Congregation and classroom

Bridging the gap

"For a long time I have noticed the kind of community that develops when a group studies Scripture together," Mary Schertz, professor of New Testament, says.

So Mary has been testing this process recently with pastors—in addition to students. Through the AMBS Engaging Pastors program, professors and pastors come together for ongoing collaboration, not just now-and-then encounters. For Mary, Engaging Pastors has meant engaging the Bible.

The contemplative study she and the pastors do together is "studying the Scripture as though one is really hungry for it, as though it meets a desperation in us—and it does. It changes us and helps us grow in Christ," Mary says.

Collaboration like this is at the heart of Engaging Pastors, which involves faculty with pastors and conference ministers across North America. Interactions among these groups happen from time to time, but Engaging Pastors gives more structure to bridging what can be a gap between classroom and congregation. The goal is to support and nourish pastors, to expand our understanding of pastoral ministry and so to strengthen the church. (See more on pages 2–3.)

Daniel Schipani, professor of pastoral care and counseling, also met with a group of pastors over several months. He wanted to test a model of pastoral ministry he has developed, and Engaging Pastors provided a framework to do this with experienced pastors. "Pastors are doing fresh things in the congregation," and keeping in touch with them helps AMBS prepare new pastors, Daniel explains.

Steve Schweitzer, assistant professor of Old Testament, participated in the Listening Project of Engaging Pastors. This took him to two different congregations for conversations with pastors, members and community representatives. "I could learn more than if I showed up on a Sunday morning to preach," Steve concludes.

Steve also worked with his pastor in a course revision project and then invited his pastor to teach with him. "By taking something I was passionate about and making sure it was relevant to people going into ministry, I saw new connections and insights I might not have had otherwise," Steve says.

For both the pastors and professors, the unhurried pace and the retreat settings are affirming and renewing. However, the benefits go beyond this. "The things we do in preparing people to be missional must be informed by the variety of congregations in the church and the variety of leadership gifts needed," Rebecca Slough, academic dean, says. Engaging Pastors helps the faculty better know the church for which we are preparing leaders, she adds. "We are being enriched by very wise and committed people." ●

Mary E. Klassen

Mary Schertz opens a study group session that focuses on the theme of release in Luke. Tyler Hartford, member of the pastoral team of Pleasant View Mennonite Church, is one of the participants.

Pastors, professors, conference ministers

Participants reflect breadth of the church

A first-year pastor from a Canadian congregation ... a conference minister from the west coast ... a Hmong congregation in the south ... the pastoral team of a city congregation ... a cluster of pastors from different denominations in a region ... Hispanic pastors in a Dallas, Texas, class. All of these have become partners with AMBS professors through Engaging Pastors.

The program includes ten components that give pastors and professors different ways to learn from each other. Now four years into a five-year plan, Engaging Pastors has a significant record both in the variety and in the number of participants. (See page 3.)

The program brings pastors to campus and professors to congregations; it brings pastors and professors together both in groups and in pairs. It has reached congregations in rural and urban settings of Canada and the U.S. The directors are taking steps to assure that diversity of racial and ethnic pastors and congregations is included. Involvement has ranged from people who are very new to ministry to those who have a lifetime of learning to share.

Nina Bartelt Lanctot, assistant director, said, "We are more able to keep the variety of pastors and contexts of the church in our minds. Each congregation has a unique culture—a mix of character, gifts and stressors. Engaging Pastors is helping us experience more of this first-hand."

"These encounters have given us a heightened awareness of how important it is to be in conversation with people in ministry," Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, director, said. "The program allows a wider range of opportunities for faculty to get into ministry settings than they would otherwise have."

Mary E. Klassen

José Elizalde, pastor from Goshen, Ind., and David Bergen, representing Mennonite Church Canada, serve on the Engaging Pastors Oversight Committee, along with Cyneatha Millsaps, pastor in Markham, Ill.; and Arthur Paul Boers, Nelson Kraybill, Mary Schertz and Rebecca Slough from AMBS. Staff for the program are Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, associate dean for leadership education, and Nina Bartelt Lanctot, assistant director of Engaging Pastors.

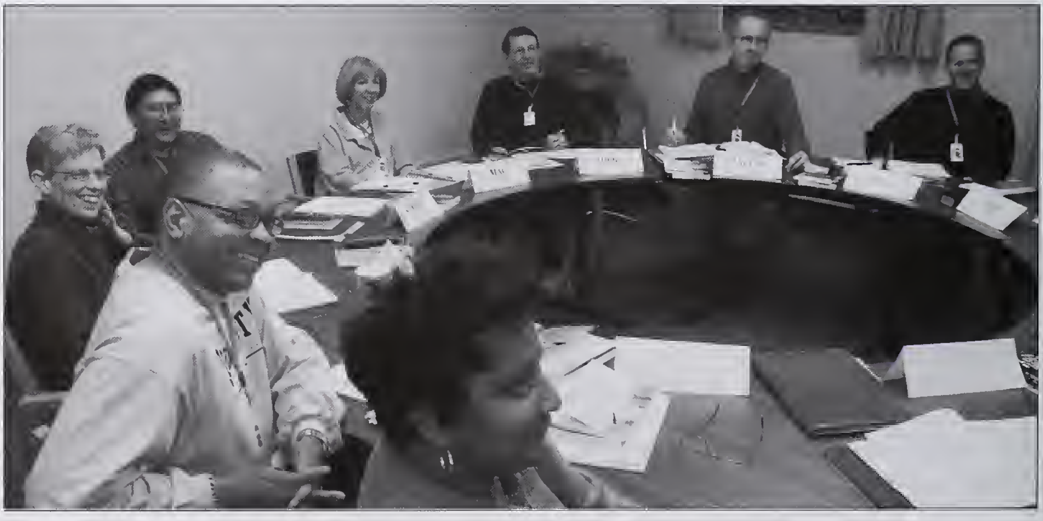
Participants for the final summative conference in December 2009 will include pastors and conference ministers who have experienced the program as well as ministry educators and denominational leaders in MC Canada and MC USA.

"We want to see if our findings resonate with conference ministers, pastors and people working with leadership in the church," Jewel said. ●

Engaging Pastors projects

- Clarifying the Call
- Pastor-Faculty Colloquy
- Pastor-Faculty Study Group
- Pastor Sabbatical
- Listening Project
- Seminary Course Revision
- Seminario Bíblico Anabautista
- Pastoral Habits Research Project
- Connections with conference and denominational leaders
- Summative Conference

For descriptions of these projects, see www.ambs.edu/engagingpastors.


Mark Shephard, Shephard Imageworks

This view of the 2005–06 Pastor-Faculty Colloquy shows the mix of pastors and faculty who participate (clockwise from center front): Carolyn and Keith Collins, pastors of the Church of the Overcomer, Ridley Park, Pa.; Rebecca Slough, AMBS faculty; Samuel Lopez, overseer of the Spanish Mennonite Council in New Holland, Pa.; Mag Richer Smith and Bob Smith, pastors of First Mennonite Church, Iowa City, Iowa; Jacob Elias, AMBS faculty; and Doug Luginbill, pastor of Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.

Projects support pastors, foster collaboration

Engaging Pastors is a five-year program that makes pastors and professors into colleagues as they learn from and teach each other. This program extends to pastors, conference ministers and congregations across North America.

According to its mission, "Engaging Pastors will transform seminary-church connections through sustained interaction between professors and pastors. Our learnings will feed into our formation of pastors and serve as a primary vehicle for AMBS strategic planning even as we support the ecology of ministry."

Begun in 2005, the program will conclude in December 2009. It is funded by a grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., whose goal was to help seminaries strengthen relationships with their sponsoring churches. ●

Engaging Pastors by the numbers

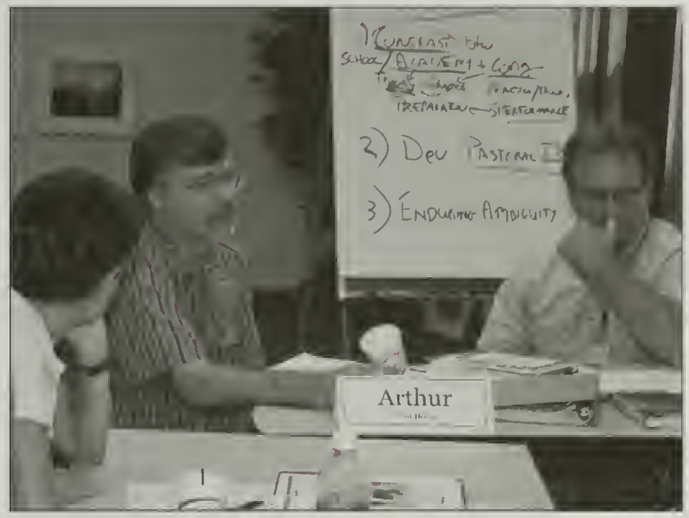
202 participants have been involved **264** times (some people have participated in more than one project). This does not count congregations or AMBS professors.

33 from Canada, **1** from Japan, **168** from the U.S.

17 professors (every member of the AMBS teaching faculty)

23 conferences (Conference ministers for all conferences have participated, along with pastors and congregations in these conferences.)

7 congregations in **5** denominations other than Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA



Mary E Klassen

Arthur Paul Boers, (left) associate professor of pastoral theology, is a facilitator for the Pastor-Faculty Colloquies, along with David Wood, (right), pastor of First Baptist Church in Gardiner, Maine.

Mary E Klassen

In January, seven pastors were at AMBS in the Pastor Sabbatical program of Engaging Pastors: Margaret and Gary Peters, Hanley (Sask.) Mennonite Church; Henry Krause, Langley (B.C.) Mennonite Church; Hugo and Doreen Neufeld, Trinity Mennonite Church, Calgary, Alb.; and Roy and Loretta Kaufman, Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Invitation to comment on AMBS

AMBS will have a comprehensive evaluation of our programs Feb. 16–18, 2009, by a team representing The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. AMBS has been accredited by the Commission since 1974. Its accreditation is at the Master's degree level.

AMBS has been engaged in a process of self study over the last year and a half. The evaluation team will visit AMBS to gather evidence that the self study is thorough and accurate. The team will then make a recommendation regarding continuing accreditation to the Commission for final action.

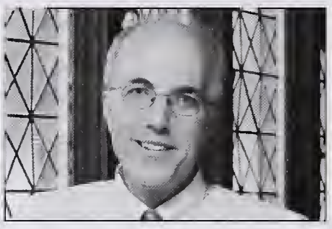
You are invited to submit comments regarding AMBS to:

Public Comment on Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
The Higher Learning Commission
30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Written, signed comments must be received by January 15, 2009. Comments should include the name, address and telephone number of the person providing the comments.

President's Window

A sidewalk at AMBS bears testimony to half a century of links between the seminary and the church. "July 25–Aug. 10 1959 / Teen-Age Work Camp," an inscription reads. The teenagers who laid that sidewalk now must be retirement age! How many became leaders in the church? How many became visionaries for Christian witness in business, agriculture, education or other vocations?



When I started seminary thirty years ago, I was sure I did not want to become a pastor. But I did internships where I encountered exciting models of ministry and had inspiring mentors. I found so much joy in connecting classroom learning to the mission of the church that I accepted a call to ordination soon after seminary.

Linking seminary education with practical ministry in the church and the world is like connecting to both poles of a battery. The church needs leaders with broad theoretical knowledge of biblical studies, ethics, theology, church history, counseling and other disciplines. But when students immersed in these studies also do internships in congregations or other practical contexts, high-voltage learning happens.

It can feel daunting for new seminary students to think of assuming the spiritual and moral responsibility for leadership in the church. But AMBS faculty members have lifelong experience in congregational leadership, service assignments, peace witness and mission work. With the Engaging Pastors project, teachers at AMBS have collaborated with pastors to ground curriculum in practical realities of ministry in the church and the world.

That connection between theory and practice, between theology and ministry, is the most transforming part of education at AMBS. Whether addressing issues of racism (see photo below) or helping congregations understand their own vocation, this generation of seminary students will leave an imprint on the church and world, to the glory of God.

— J. Nelson Kraybill

Alumni News

Steve Ratzlaff (Master of Divinity 1998) is author of *7 Steps to End War and Save the Planet*, published by Xlibris.com.

Krista Dutt (Master of Divinity 2002) is national program director of DOOR (Discovering Opportunities or Outreach and Reflection).

Craig Oury (Master of Divinity 2005) was ordained at Mount Zion Mennonite Church, Boonsboro, Md., on Sept. 21.

Troy Osborne (Master of Arts: Theological Studies 1998) is assistant professor of history at Bluffton (Ohio) University.

James Horsch (Bachelor of Divinity 1966) is chair of the committee on the Uniform Series adult Bible study materials.

Dorothy Jean Weaver (Master of Divinity 1977) co-led a work group to Nazareth and Bethlehem with a program of Virginia Mennonite Missions.

Associated Menno e
blical S ina
COMMUNITY
SOLIDARITY DAY

Mary E. Klassen

AMBS helped to coordinate Community Solidarity Day on September 13, an effort to demonstrate a commitment to peace and justice in Elkhart following racially-motivated incidents in spring. A two-mile walk began on the campus of AMBS and ended in downtown Elkhart with a program.

"Participation in this event helped students and the seminary as an institution because it was an opportunity to live our theology out loud and collectively," Sarah Thompson, AMBS student on the planning committee, said. "It was an opportunity to be brave, to take risks for peace and justice, to organize.

Fall 2008
Volume 19 Issue 1

The purpose of *AMBS Window* is to invite readers to call people to leadership ministries, and to provide ways for readers to become involved with AMBS through financial support, prayer support and student recruiting.

Editor: Mary E. Klassen
Designer: Nekeisha Alexis-Baker

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to *Canadian Mennonite* and *The Mennonite*.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
574 295-3726
www.ambs.edu

at LCC do so mostly because they have been

out among our faculty and Christian students.

ersity students and a fellow faculty member on a ferry outside of Klaipéda, Lithuania.

Challenges remain

It is difficult for LCC to recruit and retain qualified, committed faculty. About a third of our faculty members are Lithuanians, many of them LCC grads. Most of the remainder are North American volunteers supported by mission agencies and other external means. This makes it hard to recruit qualified long-term teachers. Students appreciate the few of us who stay on throughout their four-year experience.

Our students also face a challenge in paying tuition. LCC's tuition is modest by American standards, currently about $3,300 a year. But for many of our students that is a huge amount, so we offer generous financial support, most of it donated by North Americans, to enable our students to have this life-changing experience.

LCC is a model for a high-impact form of Christian mission. Where else could I as a missionary have a captive audience of several hundred young people, future leaders in various countries, who are required to take my Intro to Theology class in their third year and my Moral Philosophy class in their final semester? But what makes LCC truly effective as mission is that we not only get to teach the faith but we have the opportunity to model it by creating a Christian learning community where lives are changed.

Steve Dintaman teaches at LCC International University and works through Mennonite Mission Network.

Student leaves hatred behind

Cathal McNamara

I was born in Ireland into a distressed home. At the same time there were troubles in Northern Ireland between Republicans and Loyalists, Catholics and Protestants. I was baptized a Roman Catholic and raised in paranoia toward the Protestant faith. I remember vividly experiencing firsthand the tension between the two sides. I went on to mix with extremism and advocate the violence committed by Republican paramilitaries in Northern Ireland until midway through my education at LCC.

It was a great shock when I discovered that LCC was a Protestant-run institution. I honestly did not know this when I came. After several years at LCC and exposure to several Christian faiths, my extreme hate began to fade. I sat in Bible class or theology and understood that we are all equal before God. I understood that my hatred toward Protestants was unfounded.

None of this was forced upon me. LCC did not judge me. When I met with Steve Dintaman in my first year, he did not condemn me or judge me for my extreme standing. Through his lectures, I asked myself, What is the point of it all? I concluded that I am too tired today to hate.

At LCC, I saw Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants selflessly devoted to the Christian mission to better the lives of students who were victims of Soviet oppression. The professors, students, staff and mission have transformed my hate into love for all people, no matter what denomination.

I can no longer justify violence or hate. I can no longer stand by the extreme elements in Irish society.

I did not arrive at LCC a mission-fit student. But I will leave LCC a mission-fit student. If revealing my past and my shame displays to you the miracles that take place here, I want to reveal myself to you every day of the week.

Cathal McNamara is a 2008 LCC graduate from Ireland. This excerpt is taken from an address to the LCC board of directors last spring. Following the speech, as a symbol of turning away from hatred, McNamara presented his Republican paramilitary memorabilia to Steve Dintaman.

Mennonite by witness, not by family name

Stanley W. Green is executive director of Mennonite Mission Network.

For most of the 20th century we Mennonites have described our posture vis-à-vis the culture as "nonconformity." Sometimes this was expressed in terms of total obedience to the teachings and example of Jesus Christ. Many did not vote or pay taxes. Others endured great suffering and privation as they resisted going to war.

At other times, this nonconformity meant separation from the culture. This bore fruit in positive and unfortunate ways. During most of the 20th century, Mennonite contribution to global mission was disproportionate with our size. We sent workers to many countries around the globe. The strength of Mennonite World Conference today is a fruit of that investment. In North America, however, this call to separation went against engaging our neighbors with the gospel. Through sending witnesses to the good news of Jesus we were transformed from an essentially north-Atlantic Mennonite peoplehood into a global family representing many nations. But our record of engaging our North American neighbors was less spectacular. The congregations that generously sent witnesses to so many places failed to see themselves as sent. The sent ones were limited to the heroic few we commissioned and sent to other lands.

The journey toward becoming a missional people is an invitation to move from preservation and separation to engaging our culture to share the good news of the kingdom. This journey requires us to renounce a growing slide into accommodation with the culture. To become a missional people we must prepare and commit ourselves for deliberate transforming encounters with our neighbors and the world beyond our communities.

The Mennonite community has had a strength of family bonds. Tracing family lineages and making connections of blood have played a disproportionate role in shaping Mennonite identity. Some claim Mennonite identity even when they are not members of a church or make any confession of following Jesus. This preoccupation with a cultural Mennonite identity flies in the face of our confession of a faith not defined by allegiances of ethnicity or race, of flag or nation. On many occasions when I have introduced myself, fellow Mennonite believers say: "So, you're not Mennonite. Or was your mother a Mennonite?"

Mennonites who see their identity defined by choice and conviction too often sense there is a level of belonging for which Christ is not enough. This elusive boundary remains a major barrier to Mennonite Church USA becoming a missional peoplehood, defined by the purposes of God rather than the biological agency of human beings.

If we take seriously the demographic trends in Mennonite Church USA that show the growing edge being among new immigrant communities from Africa, Asia and Central and South America, then we must think differently about our identity. If we pay attention to these trends, reported by Conrad Kanagy in *Roadsigns for the Journey*, then we must embrace an expansive understanding of Mennonite identity. We must move from seeing particular names as identifiers of Mennonite identity to seeing Mennonites in the way we were identified in the Anabaptist movement. Mennists, as our forebears were called, were those eager to make bold witness to Jesus Christ.

These early Mennonites were marginal communities, like many new Mennonites from immigrant communities. Their primary identity was their common yearning and commitment to share their allegiance to Jesus Christ, whatever the cost. An unwarranted humility that prevents us from a bold proclamation of Jesus as Savior and Lord is a failure of understanding the nature of Christ's kingdom and a distortion of God's missional purposes. This is one of our greatest challenges.

I am thrilled that Mennonite Church USA is forming a relationship with Pentecostals. Every local congregation in Mennonite Church USA should develop a relationship with a Pentecostal church in its community. We may learn something about an openness and anticipation of the Spirit's work in our lives and communities to empower us for our witness in the world. It is no accident that the Pentecostals continue to be the fastest growing church movement in the world today.

The missional energy of the New Testament church was directly related to the Spirit's empowerment of the early disciples for their witness. It will be no different for us. We can measure our progress toward becoming a missional people by the extent to which we welcome and open ourselves to the work of the Spirit in our lives and our congregations. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Why young adults are committed to their church**—compiled by Anna Groff
- **Uncluttering the call**—Lori Leaman

CLC will try 'rotating white male' model

Constituency Leaders Council wrestles with racial healing, role of conferences.

After extensive discussion during its Oct. 19-21 meeting in Glorieta, N.M., the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) decided to use a "rotating white male voice" model on a trial basis at its next meeting.

Ed Diller, Mennonite Church USA moderator-elect and CLC chair, said this direction to "slightly mute white male voices" should serve as an example to the rest of the church. The "rotating white male voice" model was one of three suggested by the CLC's antiracism task force. In this model, participation by members of a white male caucus will be decided by the caucus and CLC members.

The other models brought by the task force included a "volunteer model" that would secure a list of white male volunteers who are on a "no call" list if the percentage of attendees needs adjustment to reach the CLC's goals and an "expand registration model" with ways to make CLC attendance less expensive and more convenient.

CLC covenants to "build a CLC council of elders in which at least 30 percent of those at the table are underrepresented racial-ethnic people." The CLC consented to aim for 25 percent at the next meeting—acknowledging the reality of an incremental change.

"The spirit we offer is moving to something in the future," said Dorothy Nickel Friesen, task force member and Western District Conference minister. "Percentages are one of the ways we look at that. The task force wanted to offer concrete options—none of which is perfect—to build on our CLC consensus to model inclusiveness at the leadership level of Mennonite Church USA."

Churchwide racial healing: CLC also passed a recommendation from the antiracism task force that asks the Executive Board (EB) to "appoint a task force to develop a healing process for the church to address the historical and current wounds of racism," according to the Sept. 23 document. Linda Dibble, Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference moderator- elect, also reported from her table a suggestion to use the Methodist reconciliation materials "Healing the Wounds" instead of MCC's Damascus Road staff and material.

Virginia Mennonite Conference letter to Executive Board: Beryl Jantzi, Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC) moderator, brought an open letter dated Oct. 8 from his conference to the Executive Board regarding plans for churchwide restructuring.

"We are serious about wanting to receive counsel from [CLC]," Jantzi said, " in terms of the tone and the content [of the letter]."

Anna Groff

Left to right: Joanne Dietzel (partially hidden), John Rohrer, Herm Weaver, Jai Prakash Masih and Merlin Morales demonstrate the role of conferences with a skit at the Oct. 19-21 meeting of the Constituency Leadership Council.

"Part of our concern with the proposal," said the letter, "relates to its basic theological principles. To us it seems hierarchical and business-like rather than patterned after the church and Christ's own example of 'incarnational' leadership."

[The plan to restructure Mennonite Church USA] seems hierarchical and business-like rather than patterned after … Christ's own example of 'incarnational' leadership.
—Virginia Mennonite Conference

Jantzi said a one-board model impacts VMC uniquely because of the conference's high representation of institutions in its geographical location and the dynamic that many church leaders wear multiple hats. This was the second letter in a series of correspondence with the EB. Diller said the executive committee of the EB plans to meet with leaders from VMC.

Role of conferences: The CLC also addressed the role of conferences and discussed new models for the future. During table discussion, George O'Reilly, Central Plains Mennonite Conference assistant moderator, reported a question from his table: Is this conversation backward … should this conversation start at the congregational level?"

CLC passed a recommendation from Diller to name a group of five or six conference executive ministers and moderators to shape the input received from its meeting and inform further processes.

"We don't want to let this work lie fallow," Diller said. "We want it to move."

Health-care access project: Executive leadership staff member Keith Harder provided an update to the health-insurance plan for pastors called the Corinthian Plan. Harder requested help from CLC in certifying the eligibility of church workers, in identifying ambassadors for the health-care plan and in encouraging congregations to participate in the plan.

Harder said 80 percent participation will be needed for the plan to work.—*Anna Groff*

2009 convention to focus on Holy Spirit

'Breathe and Be Filled' will revisit Jesus' words to his disciples in John 20.

The Mennonite Church USA Convention 2009 is far removed from when Jesus breathed his Spirit on the first disciples. But the planning committees for Mennonite Church USA's convention next July are risking the theme on the belief he'll do it again with huge crowds of Mennonites.

In a move to bring a deeper focus on the Holy Spirit than in past conventions, adult and youth planning committees chose the theme "Breathe and Be Filled," based on John 20:21-22. That is where Jesus reminds his disciples that as his Father sent him, so Jesus was sending them. To empower them to go, he breathed the Spirit upon his disciples, and they were filled. Planners hope the theme will integrate the stillness of waiting upon, listening to and receiving from the Spirit and the "sent-ness" into a broken world that is a response to this infilling and strengthening.

"We worried some constituents may feel this theme will encourage us to have a big feel-good party in God and foster a me-and-Jesus mentality that forgets we are a called and sent community," says Regina Shands Stoltzfus, adult planner from Elkhart, Ind., will colead adult convention worship with Joel Miller, pastor of Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship. "But we believe the theme encourages us to receive the breath of Christ that releases us to go and do the works God calls us to do. We are called by Christ to go out in his name through the empowerment of his fire and breath and energy."

Miller agrees now, although he wasn't sure at first. He came to planning sessions hoping the theme would focus on identity-building for the church as Christ followers in North America. But some months down the road, he believes this theme is more integrative than he initially thought. *—Laurie Oswald Robinson for Mennonite Church USA*

Financial services for the Anabaptist community

800-451-5719

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Youth Covenant Savings

To encourage thrift and fiscal responsibility, we pay higher rates on deposits of young people ages18 and under if the deposits are matched by a parent, grandparent, mentor, or other adult.

***Youth Covenant Savings:** One more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Use the World Wide Web to join God's work—across the street and around the globe.

Take your giving online to **giving.MennoniteUSA.org**

Mennonite Church USA

Marketing Manager

MMA has an opening for a marketing manager to lead efforts to develop and administer strategic marketing plans for regional offices, market credit union services, and integrate all marketing activities with the MMA brand. This is a full-time position, in Lancaster, Pa., shared between MMA and Mennonite Financial Federal Credit Union (MFFCU). Qualified candidates will have a bachelor's degree in marketing, business administration or related field, professional marketing experience, and CLU, ChFC, CFP or similar professional designation (or willingness to obtain).

MMA is an Anabaptist stewardship organization that helps people integrate their faith with their financial decisions. We are an equal opportunity employer offering a competitive salary and xcellent benefits. For more information about this position, visit our Web site, www.mma-online.org.

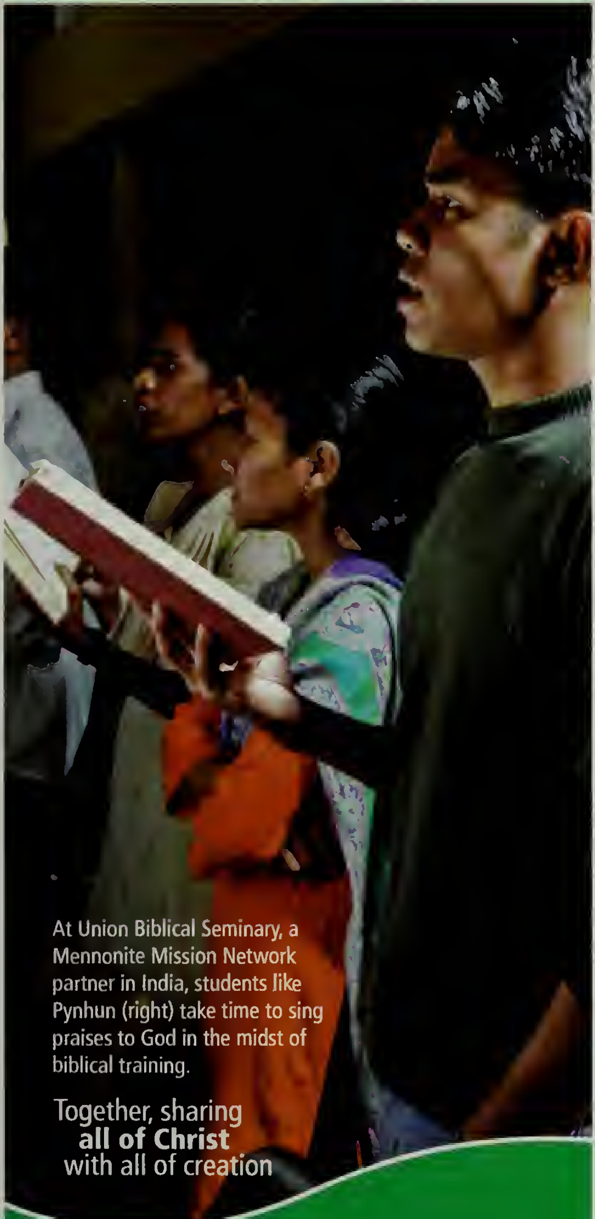
Send cover letter and resume to:

MMA
Human Resources
P.O. Box 483
Goshen, IN 46527
hr@mma-online.org
Fax: (574) 537-6635

MMA®

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Praise



At Union Biblical Seminary, a Mennonite Mission Network partner in India, students like Pynhun (right) take time to sing praises to God in the midst of biblical training.

Together, sharing
all of Christ
with all of creation

Mennonite Mission Network
The mission agency of Mennonite Church USA

300th anniversary

AMBS observes Brethren history.

A reunion of cousins is what participants called the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Brethren churches hosted by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

The Oct. 2-3 event included several opportunities for representatives of Church of the Brethren and Brethren Church to meet with students and faculty of AMBS.

The celebration was an opportunity to "listen and affirm affinity between these two Anabaptist groups with parallel origins," said Jeff Bach, one of the presenters.

Bach, who is director of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist studies in Elizabethtown, Pa., gave an overview of the Brethren movement that began with the baptism of three people by immersion in 1708. He continued by enumerating overlapping concerns among the Brethren and Mennonites. Both are Scripture-rooted movements, he said, with emphasis on an effort to live out the faith, practice discipleship, do mission and prepare for Christ's second coming.

Mennonites and Brethren both "emerged because of dissatisfaction with the reforms that were happening," Bach said. "People now are wondering whether the concerns of these early movements could be helpful today."

Though he cautioned listeners not to use history as a blueprint for the future, Bach said that concerns of the early members of the groups, such as the emphasis on Scripture and following Christ, can guide people of faith today.—*Mary E. Klassen for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary*

People now are wondering whether the concerns of these early movements could be helpful today.
—Jeff Bach

Specializing in web development and customized software

The Mennonite
http://www.themennonite.org/
TheMennonite
Home
The Magazine
Blogs
For Discussion
Subscriptions
Submissions

LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

Meeting with Ahmadinejad debated

Fresno Pacific University hosts West Coast MCC group to discuss decision.

Mennonite Central Committee's Sept. 25 meeting with Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in New York was the topic of discussion at a constituency forum hosted by West Coast MCC Oct. 1. Some 80 people attended. Former MCC executive director Robb Davis served as a resource person for the dialogue, opening the time of discussion with an impassioned explanation of why MCC felt called to engage with the Iranian leaders.

We are afraid to be the first to meet with this man.
—U.S Congressional representatives

Davis reflected on the time in 2006 when an invitation for the first such meeting came to MCC from Iran. MCC saw the invitation as an opportunity to witness, he said. "We wanted to give [President Ahmadinejad] a glimpse of God's kingdom." By meeting with Ahmadinejad, said Davis, MCC was taking a stand against the dehumanization of the enemy. In a meal together with the Iranian leader, MCC would create a sense that "what we saw across from us was a human being not beyond the touch of God."

Davis recalled MCC conversations with U.S. congressional representatives who had expressed fear of meeting the Iranians.

"We are afraid to be the first to meet with this man," the representatives told MCC. By meeting with Ahmadinejad, MCC could open the way for other conversations and witness to the reality that "Jesus' way is not the way of fear."

The dialogue that followed Davis' remarks was moderated by former Fresno Pacific University's president Richard Kriegbaum. Several people who stepped to the microphone expressed support for MCC's engagement with Iran. A few raised cautions about what they viewed as "political activity."

In conversation after the forum, many participants who had come with reservations about MCC's involvement with the Iranian leader expressed satisfaction that their questions had been answered.

Leon Thiessen, who chairs the board for the West Coast Mennonite Men's Chorus, was one such participant. He came away reassured that MCC was doing the right thing and reminded that the purpose of the event was peacemaking dialogue, not to honor any person.

More information is available on MCC's Web site: www.mcc.org.—*Kathy Heinrichs Wiest*

THE MENNONITE HOUR SINGERS | ORIGINAL A CAPPELLA RECORDINGS
all nature sings
HYMNS AND ANTHEMS OF GOD'S CREATION

NEW CD! All Nature Sings

Your spirit will soar!

Your heart and head will hum these classic hymns and anthems, bringing you into closer communion with God and nature.

Hymns and Anthems of God's Creation

Mixed chorus, men's chorus and quartet, ladies' sextet and triple trio.
Remastered from the archives of the Mennonite Hour *radio program.*

Some of the 24 featured hymns: Unto the Hills • Lift Thine Eyes • For the Beauty of the Earth • Praise to the Lord • Give to Our God Immortal Praise • Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee • When Morning Guilds the Skies • Come My Soul, Thou Must Be Waking • We Plow the Fields • The God of Harvest Praise • Praise to God, Immortal Praise • By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill • Beautiful Savior • O Thou in Whose Presence • It Took a Miracle

On CD Only
$12.95

For Christmas gifts or anytime!
(We'll even gift wrap and mail for you!)

To order: 800-999-3534 or Store.MennoMedia.org
Additional selections and quantity discounts are available.

Mennonite Media
1251 Virginia Avenue
Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Clean fun for Mennonite ventriloquist

Ryan Bomgardner brings smiles to victims of Nickel Mines school shootings.

Photo provided

Mennonite ventriloquist Ryan Bomgardner with grandparent characters "Harold" and "Irene." See Anna Groff's entire article and other photos at www.themennonite.org

Ryan Bomgardner, 24, describes ventriloquism as "puppets plus humor." His passion began at a young age, when he loved playing with sock and marionette puppets. His grandmother first exposed him to ventriloquism through a video. Ryan bought his first doll—a small one with a simple pull string from a J.C. Penney catalog—when he was 12 years old. That same year he performed for the first time at his grandmother's church in Lancaster, Pa.

Later he received a call from someone in that audience who wanted him to perform at a school auction. He went on to do 10 performances that year, and it doubled each year after. At age 17 he began to take a career in ventriloquism even more seriously through a correspondence school and joined the Christian Comedy Association. In his early 20s ventriloquism became his full-time job, although he has a degree in civil technology. Ryan gives 130 performances each year and receives about 500 performance requests yearly.

Ryan performs at a variety of functions: church events, banquets, conferences, prison ministries and more. Ninety percent of his performances are for Christian-related audiences. His favorite night is the "comedy outreach night," which is sponsored by a church. Church members bring guests who are often people who would not attend a Sunday church service.

Ryan says a spiritual highlight of the program is when he pulls his hand out of Jeffrey to illustrate that without Christ, people are empty. The image of an empty puppet often touches people.

"It's a great tool that people have gotten to know the Lord by," he says.

Ryan alters the material for corporate banquets but still emphasizes family fun.

"I like to show that we as Christians can laugh," he says. "There is funny stuff out there that isn't raunchy or dirty."

Ryan often hears "thank you" from audience members. He hears stories from people who have suffered from cancer or a death in the family and needed an evening of encouragement and laughter. One especially touching performance was for the family members and survivors of the Nickel Mines Amish school shootings in October 2006.

An adult told him after the performance, "Thank you for coming; we haven't seen [the children] laugh in a very long time."

Ryan attends Metzler Mennonite Church in Akron, Pa. For more information about Ryan and his ministry go to www.ryanandfriends.com or call 717-823-1958.—*Anna Groff*

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business.

Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

timely tip:
Check your smoke alarms!

"EMU's environment was key in helping me develop as a person engaged in living mindfully and interacting in meaningful ways with the world around me."

Andile Dube '06
business administration
Grad student at New York University and staff at non-profit, Common Cents

EMU prepares students to serve and lead in a global context.

(800) 368-2665 • **emu.edu**

Eastern Mennonite University
Harrisonburg, Va.

EMS opens campus in Lancaster, Pa.

Eastern Mennonite Seminary will offer M.Div., two other graduate degrees.

Eastern Mennonite Seminary's extension site in Lancaster, Pa., has received approval to offer a fully accredited, three-year master of divinity degree. This achievement culminates more than two years of work and offers new possibilities for students preparing for pastoral work or other areas of Christian ministry.

In spring 2006, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, located in Harrisonburg, Va., applied to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for approval to offer two graduate certificates and the M.Div. degree.

EMS also petitioned the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) national accrediting agency. This culminated in site visits last spring of delegations from the Department of Education and ATS. In separate approval processes, both organizations commended EMS for "the quality of its program, instructors and students."

"A growing number of students from Mennonite and other churches in southeastern Pennsylvania have expressed interest in earning a graduate certificate or M.Div. degree from EMS," says Mark R. Wenger, director of pastoral studies at the Lancaster branch. "However, many students find it not viable to move or commute to the main campus in Virginia."

For the M.Div. degree program, EMS in Pennsylvania negotiated cooperative arrangements with accredited seminaries in the area, including Lancaster Theological Seminary; Evangelical Theological Seminary, Myerstown, Pa.; and Biblical Seminary, Hatfield, Pa. EMS students can take seminary courses at these seminaries and receive credit at EMS.

The official notification letter by Dr. Gerald Zoharchak of the Pennsylvania Department of Education stated, "I wish you success with the degree programs and the certificate programs and know that they will be administered to reflect the high academic quality that is the standard of Eastern Mennonite University."

"I am very grateful for the dedicated and cooperative workers at the Lancaster extension," says EMS dean Ervin R. Stutzman. "I offer my congratulations to everyone on completing the difficult tasks necessary for this approval."—*Laura Lehman Amstutz for Eastern Mennonite Seminary*

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION
TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (January 3-13)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
GREAT TREK TOUR 2009 (May 24-June 4)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE TOUR (June 4-17)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (June 5-18)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-20)
MWC #1 / #2 / #3 / #4 / #6 - A Few Seats Available
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and PERU (July 12-28)
MWC #7 - PARAGUAY and IGUAZU FALLS (July 8-20)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (July 31-August 13)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (October 24-November 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2010 TOURS

AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 5-25)
WITH OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY:
SPRINGTIME in HOLLAND, BELGIUM & GERMANY (May 6-17)
LUTHERAN HOLY LAND TOUR (May 8-19)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 1-14)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA & ITS FJORDS (June 13-28)
PENNSYLVANIA to EUROPE (June 19-July 2)
ISRAEL/PALESTINE (June 24-July 5)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (June 29-July 12)
ITALY, AUSTRIA & GERMANY (July 7-17)
ENGLAND and SCOTLAND (July 23-August 4)
SWISS GLACIER EXPRESS (July 29-August 11)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with PAUL ZEHR (September 5-18)
THE ROAD to JERUSALEM (September 11-22)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE for GERMAN-SPEAKING PERSONS (September 16-29)

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451 FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

help me **change** my world
teach English
transform lives
influence society

Feeling adventurous? Looking for a new challenge? Take your teaching to Lithuania. We are looking for instructors to teach English. But teaching English is only the beginning. Join us as we engage students in an educational experience that allows them to explore faith and develop caring relationships. Be a part of equipping our students to lead in the transformation of Eastern Europe. Unleash the power of a Christian education on a society in transition.

Current Openings:
University professors in English, Business, Psychology and Theology; PhD recommended.
EFL Instructors for Intensive English Program.

For more information:
www.lcc.lt
opportunities@lcc.lt
1 888 4 ELI LCC

LCC INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

Give *The Mennonite* as a gift or subscribe for yourself.

Voices of Mennonite Church USA

During the holiday season, *The Mennonite* is offering special subscription rates when you subscribe for yourself, for yourself and a friend, or for a friend only. You'll receive extra savings when giving a gift to a friend and yourself. If you prefer to phone in your subscription or order online, call 800-790-2498 or visit www.themennonite.org.

Please enter my own subscription to *The Mennonite*:

☐ 1 year @ $40.00 - $3.95 off the regular subscription rate

I'd like to send a gift subscription* AND subscribe for myself:

☐ 1 year @ $38.00 EACH - $11.90 total savings!

I'd like to send a gift subscription only*:

☐ 6 months @ $22.00

☐ 1 year @ $40.00 - $3.95 off the regular subscription rate

I'd like to receive/send (circle one) *The Mennonite* on tape:

☐ 1 year @ $37.00 (vision impairment? ☐ yes ☐ no)

PLEASE PRINT

YOUR NAME ______________________________

ADDRESS ______________________________

ITY ______________ STATE ________ ZIP ________

ECIPIENT NAME ______________________________

DDRESS ______________________________

ITY ______________ STATE ________ ZIP ________

A gift card will be sent in your name.

pecial 6-month subscription and 1-year discounted subscription offers valid through 1/15/08 on EW subscriptions only. Kansas residents will have 6.3% sales tax added to their invoice. SCI07

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

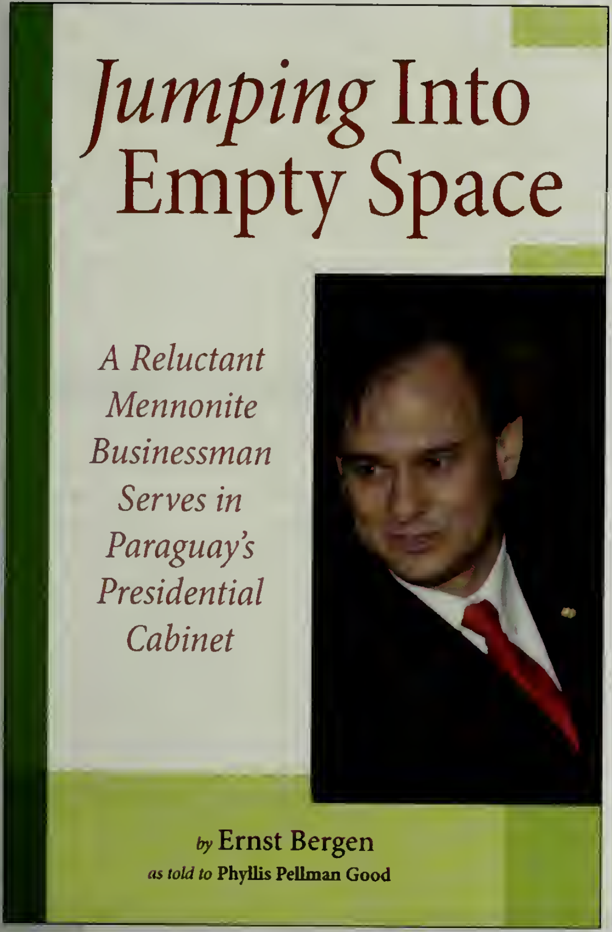
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO 580 GOSHEN IN

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

THE MENNONITE
1700 S MAIN ST
GOSHEN IN 46526-9940

A Mennonite in Government?

ERNST BERGEN had good reason to say no when the President of Paraguay asked him to join his cabinet.



Jumping Into Empty Space

A Reluctant Mennonite Businessman Serves in Paraguay's Presidential Cabinet

by Ernst Bergen
as told to Phyllis Pellman Good

208 pages • $11.95, paperback

- Massive corruption was deeply entrenched in Paraguay and would be nearly impossible to undo;
- Bergen, at age 39, had succeeded in business without participating in the black market, and he had no interest in politics;
- What's more, as a Mennonite, Bergen was reluctant to join the government for historical and theological reasons.

Jumping Into Empty Space tells two stories: the beginning of a remarkable economic turn-around in a battered country at the hand of this fearless business strategist; and the emergence of a true leader, told with unusual honesty, wisdom, and faith.

Good Books

At local bookstores or directly from the publisher • Group discounts available from the publisher. Call: 1-800-762-7171, ext. 221 • P.O. Box 419, Intercourse, PA 17534
www.GoodBooks.com • Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and AmEx accepted.
Shipping/Handling, add 10% ($3.00 minimum).

FOR THE RECORD

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

CALENDAR

The second ***Sarasota Mennonite Male Voice Festival***, with Lloyd Kauffman as director, is being planned for 2009 with **Bahia Vista Mennonite Church** again serving as host. The final program will be on Sunday evening, March 1, 6 p.m. All men who enjoy singing to God's glory are invited to participate in this thrilling event. Any questions may be addressed to: Paul Wenger; pwenger4@comcast.net; 941-870-3737.

WORKERS

Mann, Barbara Tieszen, was ordained at Cedar Falls Mennonite Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa, on Oct. 12, for her ministry as a hospice chaplain.

Ramer, Derrick, was ordained as youth pastor at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind., on Oct. 12.

Thomas, Aldine, ended a term as pastor of outreach at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Sept. 30.

Thomas, Linda, was licensed at Walnut Hill Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Oct. 12, for spiritual direction and counseling at Pathways Retreat.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Bauman, Emily Madison, Sept. 27, to Randy and Jackie Martin Bauman, Elmira, Ontario.

Beck, Michael Andrew, Sept. 9, to Andrew and Lauren Baldwin Beck, Indianapolis, Ind.

Blasi, Drake Richard, Oct. 3, to Nathan and Mary Washburn Blasi, Wichita, Kan.

Chambliss, Kyliah Lillian, Oct. 17, to Aaron and Kathryn Resler Chambliss, Kentwood, Mich.

Dupuy, Samuel James, Sept. 24, to George and Abbey Davis Dupuy, Luray, Va.

Ficke, Brynlee Rae, Aug. 22, to Dustin and Denielle Troyer Ficke, Milford, Neb.

Gertz, Bodie Christopher, Oct. 16, to Chris and Krisi Hershberger Gertz, Millersburg, Ohio.

Gorsuch, Riley Cooper, Sept. 9, to Matt and Amber Bontrager Gorsuch, Goshen, Ind.

Graber, Brenna Charae, Sept. 20, to Tim and Lisa Schmidt Graber, Wayland, Iowa.

Haarer, Luke Daryl, Oct. 13, to Daryl and Crystal Shenk Haarer, Goshen, Ind.

Halteman, Zachary Steven, Sept. 2, to Steve and Sara Brenneman Halteman, Broadway, Va.

Hoffman, Logan James, Oct. 9, to Andrew and Annelise Pettinga Hoffman, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Hostetler, Samuel Evan and Caleb Ervin (twins), Oct. 10, to Aron and Patricia Stoltenberg Hostetler, Cairo, Neb.

King, Calli Ann, Oct. 11, to Matthew and Melissa Buckwalter King, Atglen, Pa.

Landis, Cassidy Lucille, Oct. 7, to Chad and Kari Moyer Landis, Pennsburg, Pa.

Miller, Xavior James, Sept. 30, to Bryan and Jolene Steiner Miller, Orrville, Ohio.

Moyer, Arlen David, Oct. 15, to David and Starla Haas Moyer, Lancaster, Pa.

Moyer, Cameron Leigh, Sept. 29, to Brandon and Jillian Nyce Moyer, Telford, Pa.

Valentine, Griffin Lee, Oct. 13, to Jason and Melissa Beck Valentine, Wauseon, Ohio.

Watkins, Marilla Joy, Oct. 19, to Scott and Kim Watkins, Lowville, N.Y.

MARRIAGES

Caldwell/Johnson: Erin Caldwell, Westminster, Colo., and Gavin Johnson, Lakewood, Colo., Oct. 11, at First Presbyterian Church, Boulder, Colo.

Gattis/Hein: Brad Gattis, Hesston, Kan., and Carmen Hein, Hillsboro, Kan., Oct. 4, at Hesston Mennonite Church.

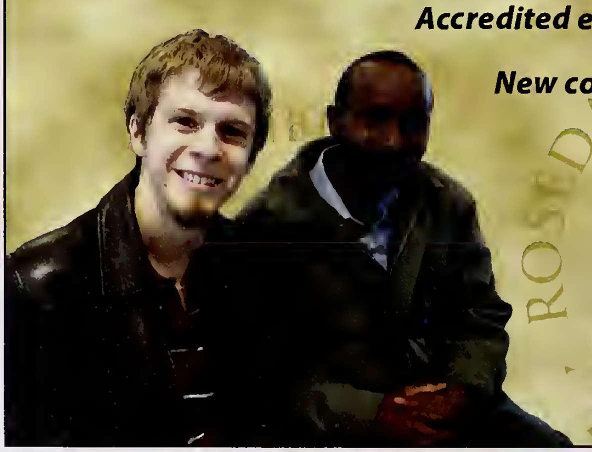
Laughlin/Sweet: Jessica Laughlin, Shipshewana, Ind., and Randy Sweet, LaGrange, Ind., Sept. 13, at Marion Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Moyer/Worley: Pete Moyer, Caney, Kan., and Diana Worley, Wichita, Kan., Sep. 20, outside at Pete's family home, Caney.

DEATHS

Blough, Ronald Lamar, 54, Windsor, Colo., died Aug. 22 of cardiac arrest. Spouse: Rhoda Miller Blough. Parents: Robert Samuel Blough and Mary Edna Nisly Blough Miller. Children: Bethany Simpson, Brooke Blough; one grandchild expected in November. Funeral: Aug. 27 at Greeley Mennonite Church, Greeley, Colo.

Claassen, Gertrude Claassen, 84, Beatrice, Neb., died Sept. 15 of complications of a hip fracture and Parkinson's Disease. Spouse: Don Aron Claassen. Parents: Henry Peter and Elisabeth Thimm Claassen. Children: Barbara Kaufman, Kathryn Colwell; five grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 20 at Beatrice Mennonite Church.



ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE

ENGAGED • EVANGELICAL • ANABAPTIST

Accredited education at half the cost of many Christian colleges

New concentrations: business, education, youth ministries

Spanish language cross-cultural term

Christ-centered community

Credits that transfer

SMALL COLLEGE, BIG IMPACT

www.rosedale.edu • 740-857-1311 • Rosedale, Ohio

Clemens, Marcus A., 92, Lansdale, Pa., died Oct. 2 of subdural hematoma. Spouse: Phyllis Leidy Clemens. Spouse: Helen Gotwals Clemens (deceased). Parents: Garrett A. and Elizabeth Alderfer Clemens. Children: Donald, Orrie, Leanne Wentorf, Jane Landes, Carolyn Bontrager, Richard; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 5 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Davidhizar, Ruth Elaine Holderman, 62, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 11 of cancer. Spouse: Ronald E. Davidhizar. Parents: Ralph and Naomi Blough Holderman. Funeral: Sept. 15 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind.

Habegger, Eric D., 83, Akron, Pa., died Oct. 1. Spouse: Gertrude Neufeld Habegger. Parents: Hans and Elsie Lerch Habegger. Children: Fred, Ralph, Ellen Ressler. Funeral: Oct. 4 at Akron Mennonite Church.

Johnston, Lois F. Ely, 96, Hesston, Kan., died Oct. 1. Spouse: John Johnston. Parents: Ernest and Lucinda Cooprider Ely. Children: Carolyn Yoder, Mary Lou Zuercher; four grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 7 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Kreider, Audrey Evelyn LaBunde, 79, North East, Md., died Oct. 9. Spouse: Joseph Benjamin Kreider (deceased). Parents: Arthur and Nellie Wray LaBunde. Children: Carol Cameron, Brenda Faulkner, Dennis; five grandchildren; three step-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 16 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Lapp, Leroy S., 88, Parkesburg, Pa., died Sept. 10 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Lucy N. Miller Lapp. Parents: Samuel F. and Susie Lantz Lapp. Children: Mary Etta King, Mel M., Jay, Carl; 12 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 13 at Calvary Monument Bible Church, Paradise, Pa.

Miller, Sam A., 93, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 7. Spouse: Clara Yoder Miller (deceased). Parents: Andy and Gertie Miller Miller. Children: Katie Troyer, Marvin; four grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; three great-great grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 10 at North Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Orendorff, A. Dorothy Claassen, 93, Flanagan, Ill., died Oct. 5. Spouse: Lyle O. Orendorff (deceased). Parents: John J.R. and Christine Penner Claassen. Children: Joe, Gene, Christine Fournier, Dorothy Porzelius; 12 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 8 at Prairieview Mennonite Church, Flanagan.

Porzelius, Violet Janet Schwartz, 78, Bluffton, Ohio, died Oct. 3. Spouse: Ernest Porzelius. Parents: Fred and Sadie Albrecht Schwartz. Children: Kathy Sawatzky, Joan LoBianco, Kris DeVoe, Jim; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 6 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Riegsecker, Marvin D., 71, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 30 of cancer. Spouse: Norma Shrock Riegsecker. Parents: Levi and Mayme Kauffman Riegsecker. Children: Steven, Michael; two grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 4 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Schwartz, Maxine E. Hoffer, 94, Wakarusa, Ind., died Oct. 2. Spouse: Ervin J. Schwartz. Parents: Arthur and Maude Freed Hoffer. Children: Jerry, Darrell; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 5 at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind.

Short, Clarissa Leigh, 19, Fayette, Ohio, died Oct. 18 from injuries sustained in an all-terrain vehicle accident. Parents: Rodney and Brenda Nofziger Short. Siblings: Ashley Zimmerman, Arin Short. Funeral: Oct. 22 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

We came for the Values, and the Value.

MENNO HAVEN
Relationships. Values. Options.
MENNO VILLAGE • NORTHFIELD • PENN HALL
800.222.6695 www.mennohaven.org
Menno Haven is committed to providing equal housing for all.

Paraguay & Peru

Join
Everett and Barbara Thomas
in Paraguay for
Mennonite World Conference
and then beautiful Peru

ITINERARY*
July 12, 2009 . . Overnight flight to Asunción
July 13 . . . . .Asunción
July 14-18 . . . . . . .MWC Assembly Gathered
July 19 . . . . . . Worship/free time in Asunción
July 20 . . . Hospital Mennonita, Iguassu Falls
July 21 . . . . Flight to Lima, Peru
July 22 . . . . Lima and Cuzco
July 23 . . . . . . Cuzco and the "Sacred Valley"
July 24 Machu Picchu "Lost City of the Incas"
July 25 . . . . . . .Free/Machu Picchu (optional)
July 26-27 . . . . .Return flight home

Everett Thomas is a veteran of four Mennonite World Conference assemblies and can put your experience with the 2009 Assembly Gathered into the context of the previous 20 years.

*Itinerary is subject to change. For complete details including the tour itinerary, rates and inclusions, please contact:

Tara Nisley, Group Travel Specialist
Menno Travel Service
Phone: 574-975-7766 or 866-606-6198
Email: tara@mennotrav.com
Web site: www.mennotrav.com

The **Gather 'Round curriculum project** seeks additional ***experienced writers.*** Active membership in a Brethren or Mennonite congregation is preferred, as is teaching experience. Send a letter of inquiry, including information about writing and teaching experience, to Gather 'Round, gatherround@brethren.org, or 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120. Gather 'Round Sunday school materials are published for the Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Church Canada, and Mennonite Church USA and are also used by other denominations.

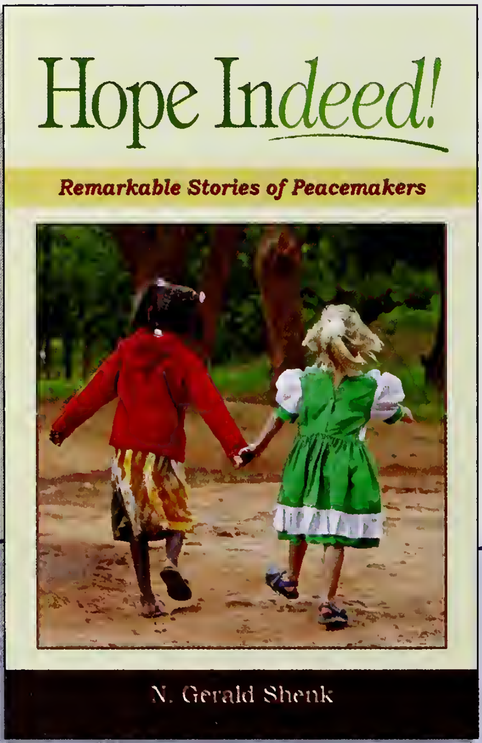
Bluffton University invites applications for a ***full-time, tenure-track faculty position in social work*** beginning fall 2009. MSW degree from an accredited social work program and minimum of two years of practice experience is required. Ph.D. or ABD preferred. Should demonstrate effective teaching skills and experience. Teach a range of courses including human behavior in the social environment, macro practice, social welfare and children and family services. Ability to teach courses in geriatrics and/or criminal justice is a plus. Responsibilities of all faculty include student advising and teaching courses in the general education curriculum, which emphasizes an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the liberal arts and sciences. Scholarship is supported and service activities with community/church are encouraged. Review of applications begins Dec. 1 and continues until an appointment is made. Compensation is commensurate with education and experience within the university pay scale. Send letter of interest, curriculum vita or resumé, three letters of reference (submitted directly from referee or if necessary from placement office) and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Academic Affairs, 1 University Drive, Bluffton, OH 45817-2104. See www.bluffton.edu. Bluffton University welcomes applications from all academically qualified people who respect the Anabaptist/Mennonite peace church tradition and endorse Christian higher education in a liberal arts environment. Members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. EOE.

Albany Mennonite Church in Albany, Ore., seeks a ***pastor or co-pastor team***. Our 145-member congregation desires leadership committed to Anabaptist theology and congregational life. We're an active congregation in a newly expanded facility. For more information contact Donna Miller at 541-926-3025 or ddmiller2@comcast.net.

Promotional/marketing writer**: Mennonite Mission Network** seeks an innovative, experienced promotional writer to create fund-raising and advertising pieces. This full-time marketing and communication associate will also assist with constituency surveys and market research as well as write articles for various Mennonite Mission Network publications and assist in creating marketing plans for Mission Network departments. The ideal candidate will be a committed Christian, participate in a congregation and be a collaborative team player. Must be willing to embrace diversity as well as develop and implement antiracism guidelines for the department. Marketing/communication degree with writing experience/marketing emphasis preferred. Proven writing and editing skills; understanding of fund-raising theory and strategies. For more information, see Staff Opportunities at www.MennoniteMission.net or call Linda Krueger at 574-523-3009. Mennonite Mission Network is an antiracist organization.

Mount Joy Mennonite Church seeks ***full-time equivalent associate pastor(s)*** for Christian formation and nurture: youth (.5), children (.25) and adult education (.25). Ministry responsibilities can be fulfilled by one to three people. There is flexibility in how the positions are configured, offering options for part-time or full-time, if combining several areas of giftedness. When applying, please note the area(s) of responsibility of interest to you and your availability for full-time and/or part-time. Mail resumés, in confidence, to Mary Fretz, 123 David St., Mount Joy, PA 17522 or contact Brad Wagner by telephone: 717-665-3529 or email bradnat@dejazzd.com.

Remarkable Stories of Hope and Peace



Gerald Shenk has traveled to and lived in many difficult places. He goes to teach—and to spot people who act out of hope. When he began to feel fortified by what he discovered, even foolishly rich, he wrote what he had witnessed and heard for the rest of us.

Hope Indeed! is his collection of stories of stunningly ordinary people behaving with extraordinary hope.

Says Shenk, "Here are stories to rehearse if we want to become people who subvert vengeance with kindness."

5½ × 8½ • 108 pages
$9.95, paperback • Group discounts available.

Good Books®

At local bookstores or directly from the publisher • Group discounts available from the publisher.
Call: 1-800-762-7171, ext. 221 • P.O. Box 419, Intercourse, PA 17534 • **www.GoodBooks.com**
Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and AmEx accepted. Shipping/Handling, add 10% ($3.00 minimum).

Eastern Mennonite University, located in Virginia's scenic Shenandoah Valley, seeks qualified candidates for the position of ***provost***. The provost serves as chief academic officer of the university and supervises numerous administrative offices. The provost provides leadership and vision for internal functions of the university and develops cooperative relationships among university programs, departments and divisions. The provost assists the president in representing the university to church, community and educational constituent groups. Qualifications include earned doctorate; successful teaching, leadership, administrative and interpersonal experience at the college or university level; membership in or willingness to affiliate with an Anabaptist congregation; and knowledge of the Mennonite church with a commitment to the mission of Mennonite/Anabaptist higher education. To apply send a letter of application and curriculum vitae or resumé to Loren Swartzendruber, President, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email lorens@emu.edu. For more information, visit our Web site: www.emu.edu/humanresources.

Dr. Tony Campolo will be leading **Men's Retreat at Spruce Lake Retreat**, Jan. 8-9, 2009, Pocono Mountains, northeastern Pennsylvania. To be challenged to deeper, active discipleship, call 800-822-7505. Package: $99/person. www.sprucelake.org

Can't find a Mennonite spiritual director near your home? For many years I couldn't either. But now, wherever you live in the United States, you can meet me for spiritual direction using a Webcam and high-speed internet connection. I've been a Mennonite pastor and church leader for 26 years, a spiritual director for 12 and have a doctorate in Christian spirituality. Your first session is free, and if you need to buy a Webcam or headset, your second session is also free. For subsequent sessions I suggest $50-$80, depending on your means. Visit www.danschrock.org or write me at dan@danschrock.org.

Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, a congregation of about 60 people, worshipping in an inner-city neighborhood, is searching for a ***half-time pastor***. Hope seeks a pastor with appropriate educational and leadership qualifications who is enthusiastic about working with the congregation to articulate vision and vocation while encouraging the use of the inherent gifts and talents within the congregation. We are a member of Mennonite Church Manitoba and Mennonite Church Canada and follow MC Canada salary guidelines. For further specifics regarding this opportunity and/or to submit an application, please be in touch with: Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Bruce Guenther, 7-821 St. Paul Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3G OK9; email bruceguenther@yahoo.ca.

Ever wanted to hang out with youth in the Pacific Northwest, enjoy the Cascade Mountains, the Oregon Coast and play music? **Lebanon Mennonite Church, Ore.**, is seeking a ***full-time associate pastor*** to help with youth and music programs. If interested please contact us at kauffman@netzero.com or send resumé to LMC, P.O. Box 575, Lebanon OR 97355, or call 541-258-5789 or 541-409-3336.

Portland Mennonite Church (www.portlandmennonite.org) is a growing, diverse congregation in an urban setting. We are seeking a ***full-time associate pastor of youth ministries*** to provide leadership to the church's ministry with children and students. Qualifications include a commitment to the theology and practices of Mennonite Church USA, seminary training and/or significant experience and a passionate sense of calling to youth ministry. Interested people should contact Beulah Hess-Yoder, Search Committee Chair, at pmcadmin@teleport.com or 503-234-0559.

Singles are invited to **Spruce Lake Retreat** Dec. 5-7, 2008, for a weekend of fellowship, worship and fun. Spruce Lake is located in the beautiful Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. Singles-friendly retreat package, $185/person. Call 800-822-7505 for reservations; www.sprucelake.org.

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. in Akron, Pa., is a Christian relief and development organization with a strong commitment to peacemaking. MCC U.S. is seeking qualified applicants for a ***human resources director*** to facilitate a network of practitioners across the United States. Three years of experience in human resources management, recruitment and interpretation of employment law are required. A job description is available at www.mcc.org/serve. Send resumé and letter of interest to: Becky Stahly at rss@mcc.org, or MCC Human Resources, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, or call 717-859-1151. Application review begins Nov. 14.

Goshen College announces five ***full-time, tenure-track faculty positions*** in the departments of ***Art, Biology, Education, English*** and ***Physics*** beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year. Application reviews will begin Dec. 1, 2008, and continue until the positions are filled. Please visit our Web site at www.goshen.edu/-employment for more information about each position's responsibilities and requirements as well as to submit an application. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with Mennonite Church USA.

• • travel with a purpose • •

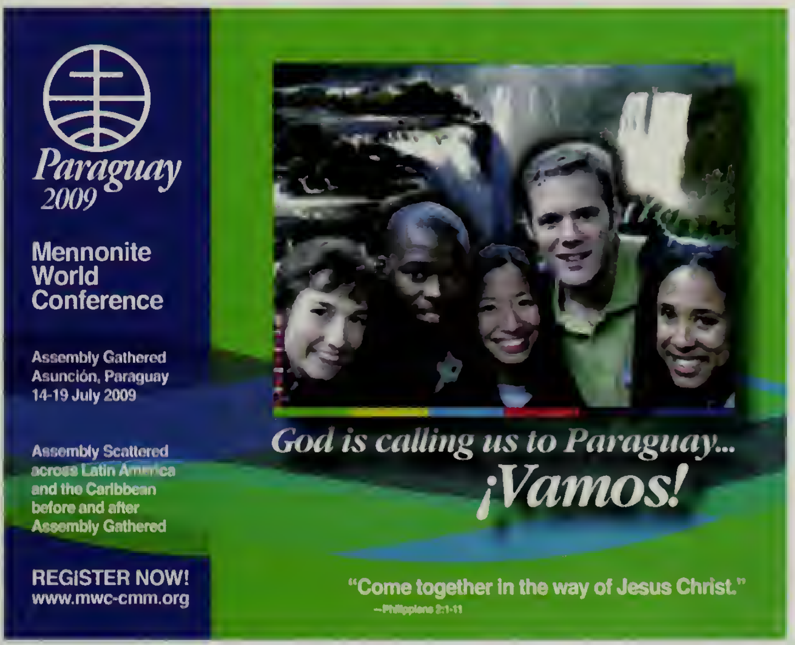
Mennonite Your Way

MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE
FROM PARAGUAY TO PERU
July 8 - 26, 2009

— 10 new seats now available —

- *Attend Mennonite World Conference Global Assembly 15, Asuncion, capital of Paraguay*
- *Visit the Chaco, home to German Mennonite "Old Colony" immigrants, see schools, farms, industry, churches*
- *Feel the power of Iguazu, the great waterfalls between Brazil and Argentina, 275 cascades, 400 bird species*
- *Cross the Andes to Cusco, Peru, contact local churches and missions, on to Machu Picchu—"Lost City of Incas"*

MYW Tours • Box 425 • Landisville, PA 17538 • 717/653-9288 • 800/296-1991
Email: myw1525@aol.com • web: www.mywtours.com


Paraguay 2009
Mennonite World Conference
God is calling us to Paraguay...
¡Vamos!
"Come together in the way of Jesus Christ."
—Philippians 2:1-11

Assembly Gathered
Asunción, Paraguay
14-19 July 2009

Assembly Scattered
across Latin America
and the Caribbean
before and after
Assembly Gathered

REGISTER NOW!
www.mwc-cmm.org

An empty chair at the (political) table

Gerald Shenk teaches at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va. His book, *Hope Indeed! Remarkable Stories of Peacemakers*, appears this summer (Good Books).

Our family occasionally celebrates a Passover Seder complete with roast lamb, the ceremonial Seder plate, friends and, yes, an empty chair and empty cup for Elijah. The cup is typically filled toward the end of the meal in hopes that the prophet Elijah may appear, announcing the coming of the Messiah. We learned this tradition from Jewish friends, followers of Jesus at Reba Place Church in Evanston, Ill.

More recently, we've celebrated a Seder meal with our church family, incorporating Jesus' story into the Passover's reenactment of liberation. It's always a wonder to experience Jesus' transformation of the Passover into a Jesus meal. And when we celebrate it, we like to think of Jesus as the guest occupying that empty chair and pouring wine into that empty cup. In fact, we thrill to think of it that way—an awareness that is both sobering and spine-tingling.

David Shenk, well-known pioneer of Muslim-Christian dialogue, has also referred to an open chair at the table. He says it's helpful to have an open chair in any gathering where Christians and Muslims sit together talking about Jesus. And Jesus does come into that circle, he says, changing the dynamic of the conversation and rising above any of the claims advanced about him by either group.

Would Jesus at our table change the way we regard each other, no matter what our difference?

Last month, I cohosted a conversation among more than 20 Mennonite scholars and church leaders at Laurelville Mennonite Conference Center in Mt. Pleasant, Pa. I experienced an open chair for Jesus in that gathering as well. We sat in a circle passing a "talking stick" as we took turns talking about our journeys with Jesus. Imagining Jesus in the circle meant we spoke to him rather than about him, which profoundly changed the character of our conversation. Speaking with him as audience changed the way we heard our colleagues' perspectives on the atonement and resurrection. The grace that marked our careful listening across ordinarily tension-ridden theological differences was perceived by many as close to miraculous.

Perhaps an open chair for Jesus at our family tables could help us when we discuss tough questions in politics, family finances and our plans for the future. It's admittedly tricky business—imagining Jesus as present in any circle. We're normally tempted to use Jesus to our own advantage or pretend we know how Jesus would weigh in on any given topic. In fact, some of us have seen Jesus so manipulated and reduced to fit a speaker's self-interest that we simply avoid making any reference to our hope for Jesus to be present at the table. It often seems easier to get it wrong than to get it right.

But I've too often seen the miracle of Jesus' presence transforming ordinary conversations and disputes to give up trying.

I long for Jesus to have a chair at our tables as the political temperature rises in this overheated election season. The name-calling, unfair caricatures and outright lies show us at our worst. It often seems the candidates and those of us who too passionately join their partisan efforts aren't just trying to score points but to destroy people in the process.

Several months ago I responded in disbelief when a friend told me what her relative said of the candidates: "I don't really like John McCain, but you know I'd never vote for that n—."

If we asked Jesus to pull up a chair in our family circle, how would it change the character of our table conversation about this election? If we cultivated an awareness of Jesus listening in, would it change our reading of the accusations and hatred deliberately strewn across the landscape?

How would it change the way we voice our dismay over abortion and the terrible anguish that pushes people to consider it in the first place? Might we together be able to share a lament for the neglect of prenatal health care and the lack of adequate coverage for the babies who survive and enter the patchwork maze of complicated access to education, health and human services?

Would inviting Jesus to the table enable us to step back and reclaim our primary allegiance to the kingdom of God? How could his empty chair remind us to be fair in our assessment of the trade-offs the various candidates present us?

And most of all, how would Jesus at our table change the way we regard each other, no matter what our difference—regarding each other as better than ourselves—whether Muslim, Jew, conservative, liberal, black, anglo, latino, democrat, republican, independent? I long for that deep respect to be a reality at our family table, praying, as we often do at the beginning of a meal: "Be present at our table Lord. Be here and everywhere adored. These mercies bless and grant that we may live in peace and dwell with thee."

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Continued from page 5

originated the word "killology," every time a child plays an interactive video game he is learning the exact same conditioned reflex skills as a soldier or police officer in training. Grossman's claims may seem extreme to teens who like to play video games. But they should know that Lt. Col. David Grossman is an expert on the psychology of killing; one of the many books he wrote was nominated for a Pulitzer. He wrote an article in 1998 called "Trained to Kill," adapted from a lecture he gave at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

In making decisions about whether to play or not to play video games, kids Travis' age should tap into just a little of the information available among educators, sociologists, child-development specialists and psychologists—along with their religious and peer discussions. Outcomes in all cases are likely to be better if decisions are based on information from knowledgeable experts rather than being supplied by the manufacturer of a product.—*Bonnie Heppner, Salem, Ore.*

Resurrection power is our hope

In Berry Friesen's article ("A Poisonous Brew," Sept. 2), he writes about how in recent years there has emerged "a synthesis between Christian triumphalism (we deserve the best) and U.S imperialism (we are the strongest)." This is indeed a "poisonous brew" because it fosters the view among both our leaders and our citizenry that God's favor rests upon us more than any other people. It tends to promote the feeling that we will always be blessed—in this life and in the life to come—just because we are Americans. We tend to become indifferent to those outside our circle who need our understanding and help.

Jesus' prayer to his Father was for God's kingdom to come, God's will to be done, on earth as it is in heaven—here and now, not just in some future millennium, not just in America but all over the world. What are the ways, how can we speak and live to bring people into his kingdom here in our time? How can we stand up against the tide of popular religiosity and American patriotism, both within ourselves and our leaders?

As Friesen says, it is only as we put our hope in the Resurrection, the power that enabled the early Christians to remain true to their Lord.—*Edwin G. Moyer, Quakertown, Pa.*

Intercessory prayer can let us off the hook

Isn't intercession wonderful? Just four words per person ("God bless Harry. Amen"). And it doesn't cost a thing, if you know what I mean. Presented by Christianity-Lite (10 percent real fruit)—*Dennis Wood, Palmyra, Pa.*

RESOURCES

Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative by Robert E. Webber (BakerBooks, 2008, $14.99) shows how worship tells God's story, pointing specifically toward prayer as a style of worship rather than a show or presentation.

Bouquets: Intentional Relationships in Making Disciples by Bruce Hamsher (Herald Press, 2008, $11.99) puts everyday evangelism and daily discipleship into readable and understandable terms.

I Am Not a Social Activist: Making Jesus the Agenda by Ronald J. Sider (Herald Press, 2008, $16.99) calls on those in the evangelical stream to become more aware and concerned about poverty, injustice and peacemaking, while urging socially active Christians to embrace the Great Commission and be more committed to Christ than to political agendas.

Beyond Me: Grounding Youth Ministry in God's Story by Wendell J. Loewen (Herald Press, 2008, $18.99) helps Christian youth workers think theologically and practically about the work they do. It examines postmodern youth culture, reflects on popular ministry models, then presents a biblical paradigm that speaks to youth based in Anabaptist emphases on community, discipleship and compassionate service.

The Emerald Angel: A Novel by Wilma L. Derksen (Herald Press, 2008, $11.99) conveys truths about living at peace with God and humankind.

Spoken Among the Trees: Poems by Jeff Gundy (The University of Akron Press, 2008, $14.95) is the latest collection by the Mennonite poet who teaches at Bluffton (Ohio) University. To order, visit uakron.edu/uapress.

Being Consumed: Economics and Christian Desire by William T. Cavanaugh (Eerdmans, 2008, $12) addresses basic economic matters—the free market, consumer culture, globalization and scarcity—arguing that we should not just accept these as givens but should instead change the terms of the debate.

Liberating the Bible: A Guide for the Curious and Perplexed by Linda M. MacCammon (Orbis, 2008, $24) clarifies the nature and purpose of the Bible, providing an ethical guide examining two main stories from both testaments and showing how they reveal God's plan for salvation.

The Other Game: Lessons from How Life Is Played in Mexican Villages by Philip Dahl-Bredine and Stephen Hicken (Orbis, 2008, $19) show the damage done by agricultural policies and trade practices coming from the North, then show another way to live and produce food.

A Usable Past? A Story of Living and Thinking Vocationally at the Margins by Paul Peachey (DreamSeeker Books and Herald Press, 2008, $16.95) is an autobiographical account that asks whether Mennonites' focus on professionalization and institution building risked hiding the Anabaptist light under a bushel.

The Work of Jesus Christ in Anabaptist Perspective: Essays in Honor of J. Denny Weaver, edited by Alain Epp Weaver and Gerald J. Mast (Cascadia Publishing House and Herald Press, 2008, $16.95), collects essays by 20 theologians, biblical scholars, historians, pastors and peacemakers.

Voices of Hope: Stories of Recovery by Joan K. King and Jay Ruth (Cascadia Publishing House, 2008, $29.95) is a 25-minute DVD that presents three stories based on live interviews with three people in recovery from mental illness.

*********************************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 893 15-DEC-09 66994 S32 P5
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

What good news?

Christians on the extreme religious right want to get you saved, but after that, they don't care if you starve. Mennonites want to feed you, but they don't care if you're saved.

This was the conclusion a banker friend of mine shared when we met for a cup of coffee last month. Describing himself as a "religious mutt"—he grew up Catholic and is now Methodist—this friend was curious about the Mennonites in our community. He wanted to know whether he would be welcomed in a Mennonite congregation. He was surprised when I said any of our congregations would welcome him.

"But I don't get that impression from the Mennonites I know," he said.

This is not the first time I have heard people say that our congregations are not welcoming. We are often viewed as closed to those who don't know the code behaviors in our culture.

There may be many reasons why we are not welcoming. Here are a few:

Self-loathing: We really don't like ourselves, and that leaves our voice weak. More than 100 years ago, C. Henry Smith identified this as a problem.

"To be an effective force in disseminating our faith we must overcome our inherited tendencies toward self-deprecation and lack of self-confidence," Smith said in a speech in 1906.

The good news is not very attractive when we portray the Christian walk as a lifetime of doing the right things with the hope that doing so will transform us.

Gerald Mast, communication professor at Bluffton (Ohio) University, who sent me the information about C. Henry Smith, is more pointed.

"Mennonites don't think that anyone like themselves is worth following," Mast says. "It's always someone 'out there' who has more credibility, whether it be Billy Graham or James Dobson or Joyce Meyer or Brian McLaren or whatever the latest outside authority is. Someone from Elkhart (Ind.) or Newton (Kan.) is not going to cut it."

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Reacting to cheap grace: Mixed with this self-loathing is an overreaction to a salvation that is afforded others too easily. We have a visceral reaction to any notion that once a person confesses Jesus as Savior they will be saved no matter what they do afterward. While our convictions about a life of discipleship are important, at times we are so determined not to ever get into the "cheap grace" ditch that we remain in the gully on the other side of the road: works righteousness.

This is where we have trouble explaining to unchurched people what is good and healthy about a life in Christ. The good news is not very attractive when we portray the Christian walk as a lifetime of doing the right things with the hope that doing so will transform us.

Too rich to care: We may also have trouble sharing the gospel because we are fat and happy in our North American context. Even though our retirement accounts took a hit during the stock market's recent meltdown, we still have plenty to eat and money to spend on the things we want. Ours is not a faith that relies on God for each day's sustenance—as may be the case for some of our neighbors. Since we may not really mean that part of the Lord's Prayer that asks for daily bread, the good news of God's provenance in everyday matters has little or no substance.

The good news: So what can we do to be a missional people and care about others' salvation?

First, let Christ emanate from our words, actions and demeanor. In these unsettled times, we can remain calm and let God's healing and hope flow through us without being self-conscious, proud or complacent.

Second, we can let go and let God work in the midst of relationships, conversations and decisions each day. God's Spirit is already present in those places; it is our task to discern that presence. God's Spirit will nudge us to speak or act at the appropriate time.

These spiritual disciplines, then, become the good news of God's saving help. And it can include both feeding the hungry and caring whether that hungry person also comes to believe in God's love and accepts salvation.—*ejt*

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

November 18, 2008

YOUNG ADULTS committed to the church

Page 8

NOV 1 9 2008

12 Uncluttering the call

16 An evangelical peace and justice church

18 On fences, Christ and a D.P.

32 Change is coming to *The Mennonite*

My congregation has shaped me

Ron Adams is pastor at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa.

I have now completed my 10th year of pastoral ministry at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church. It's hard to believe. I can still recall candidating, the anxiety of discerning a call, the wonder of hearing that yes both from within myself and from the congregation. It seemed my predecessor had been at East Chestnut Street forever. I have now been here longer than he was.

That's long enough to reflect on how this congregation has shaped me. We sometimes think pastors shape congregations. We talk less about the reverse. But there are many ways this congregation has shaped me, personally and professionally.

I came to East Chestnut Street with a clear commitment to protect my family life from the demands of ministry. While the leadership supported my commitment, I expected them to begin whittling away at it, asking for more and more of me and leaving less for my wife and sons.

Instead this congregation has encouraged me to hold to that commitment. At times they have even insisted I do so, when my perfectionism drove me to spend too many hours on congregational business. What a gift this has been to me and to my family, one given freely, not grudgingly. The congregation helped me stay true to myself and hold to my calling as husband and father.

In the early days of my ministry, I worried about those not-so-subtle expectations often placed on a pastor's children by a congregation. I worried that our sons would be held to a higher degree of perfection, be expected to display their haloes upon entering the sanctuary. I braced myself to resist such pressures and protect my sons from such well-meaning oppression.

After 10 years, I am happy to say that our sons were not the objects of anything like what I feared. Instead they were treated the same as all the East Chestnut Street kids. They were nurtured, embraced, called to faith, sometimes tolerated and always blessed as the typical children they were. Their haloes were not expected to shine any brighter or sit any straighter on their heads. In sharing love so freely with our sons, our congregation revealed the grace of God and called me to a similar Christlike love.

It took me about two years to find my preaching voice. Part of that was my lack of experience. Part of it was the high value placed on preaching in this congregation. Sermons are actually listened to here, a double-edged gift. All preachers hope to have their words taken seriously and their efforts rewarded by an attentive body. At the same time, we worry that our reading of Scripture may be off the mark or missing some crucial detail or be flat and uninspired. We worry we may be wrong or, worse, irrelevant.

Over the years, I have decided that preaching in a congregation that listens is worth the extra worry. The congregation pushes me to strive harder to find points of application, to wrestle more fully with difficult texts. In the process I have not only found my voice but become a better preacher.

In these and many other ways, I have been formed by this congregation. I am a better person and a better pastor because of them.

I don't need false humility to say that someday, when my time at East Chestnut Street ends, the congregation will easily replace me and keep moving along. I'd like to think my service will have benefited the congregation in ways that will last beyond my leaving. Only God can say.

But I know that I will carry what I have learned at East Chestnut Street to wherever God calls me next. More importantly, I will carry it in my heart and give thanks.

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 22, November 18, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite Church
USA

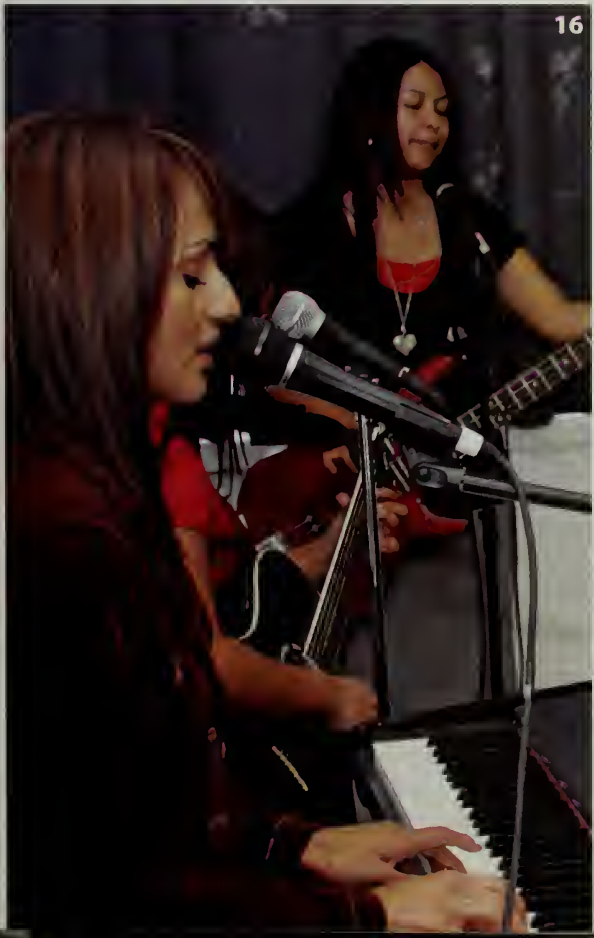
CONTENTS

LIBRARY
NOV 19 2008

6

7

20


16

8 Young adults want peace, family in church
Seven young adults say why they are committed to their congregations and how important it is that they be Mennonite.
—compiled by Anna Groff

12 Uncluttering the call
How to get connected with our young adults—*Lori Leaman*

14 A seat at the table
The place of Mennonite youth and young adults in the Mennonite church—*Justin James King*

16 An evangelical peace and justice church
An emphasis on peace and justice and evangelistic outreach can go hand in hand.—*Matt Friesen*

19 Enrollment down at colleges, universities
—Everett J. Thomas

20 Persecution in India affects meetings

21 MCC launches major appeal for Sudan

22 Young adults set own agenda at retreat

23 Task force formed for *The Mennonite*

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
My congregation has shaped me—*Ron Adams*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking out
On fences, Christ and a D.P.—*L. Lamar Nisly*

26 For the record

30 Mediaculture
Books on the church, Jesus and spirituality—*Gordon Houser*

32 Editorial
Change is coming to *The Mennonite*—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: 2005 Charlotte Assembly | MC USA

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Spanish language

"Executive Board OKs Health-Care Plans" (Oct. 7) refers to the difficulty of finding Spanish reading material. I found not very helpful Ron Rempel's comment that there is dusted Sunday school material on the shelves at Mennonite Publishing Network. This is an issue of context.

The tendency for many publishers is to translate material from English to other languages. But there are a couple of things that need to be taken into account compared to English-speaking people: (1) Spanish-speaking people do not read as much, (2) the levels of education are lower, (3) buying books is not a priority for people with a low income, (4) Spanish-speaking people like to read about issues of interest more than theology or Bible reference. It is important to look at these issues when thinking about writing material in Spanish.—*Nestor Raul Bogoya, Winnipeg, Man.*

Ron Rempel responds

I agree fully with Nestor Raul Bogoya that translation needs to take context into account. This point was also made at the Executive Board meeting. As part of that discussion there, I noted that some level of "ownership" by potential user groups in the selection and translation of resources is important. The fact that some translated materials from the past are gathering dust on the shelf makes me wonder whether the attention to context and user ownership was adequate.

I hope we can learn from those past translation projects as we apply our collective efforts to a new Spanish-language initiative.—*Ron Rempel, executive director, Mennonite Publishing Network*

Vote with our lives

Thanks to Rod Stafford ("Not Politics as Usual," Oct. 21). Years ago I realized change for the good will never come through the political system. Christians' goal should be to expand the kingdom, and that comes as we vote with our life. Christians spend too much time debating whether to vote "pro-life" or for peace and social concerns. I vote, even though I haven't trusted a president since Jimmy Carter. But real change comes as we Christians roll up our sleeves and work to carry out the Great Commission, serve each other and our neighbors and have a positive impact on those in our sphere of influence.—*Barry J. Eckert, Barto, Pa.*

IN THIS ISSUE

Our cover story (page 8) asks seven young adults why they are committed to their congregations and how important it is to them that their congregations are Mennonite. Assistant editor Anna Groff compiled these responses, which provide insight and hope. Lori Leaman (page 12) calls us to help young adults discover their God-given gifts and use them. Justin James King (page 14) urges adults to listen to young adults and young adults to speak up. Matt Friesen (page 16) challenges the divide between an emphasis on peace and justice and on evangelistic outreach, claiming they go hand in hand. Read more about young adults in Anna's report of a young adult retreat (page 22). We also report a decline in enrollment at Mennonite colleges and universities. Finally, look for changes in the magazine in the coming year (page 32).—*Associate editor*

Peacemaking and Iran's Ahmadinejad

I was floored by Seth Ramer's comment in the Oct. 21 Readers Say, "What a contradiction of terms; peacemaking and Ahmadinejad in the same sentence." If it's not the Ahmadinejads of life we are supposed to be making peace with, who is it? Is Seth Ramer suggesting that there are two levels of enemies—those we make peace with and those we don't make peace with? How do we fit that into our New Testament theology of peace? It would appear to me it is precisely those with whom we have the greatest disagreement that we need to be working toward peace with most aggressively. I am grateful to Mennonite Central Committee for leading the effort.—*Larry Augsburger, Kidron, Ohio*

I was surprised to read Seth Ramer's letter regarding Mennonite Central Committee's dialogue with President Ahmadinejad of Iran because my opinions reflect the opposite position. I applaud MCC's courage in taking this risk, engaging in an unpopular conversation and believing that by allowing the Holy Spirit to work we can build bridges between ourselves and the people of Iran. Bridge-building is the work of the church. However, it was because of my surprise that I was reminded that we are not all in agreement. I will seek to understand Seth's view, just as I believe we need to seek areas of understanding with Iranians.—*Derek Yoder, Plainfield, Ill.*

Expand Christian Peacemaker Teams

I agree with the thrust of "Expand CPT: A Plea to Mennonite Leaders" (Oct. 7.) Whether that way or another is most likely to accomplish the purpose, I don't know. But I support many "Christians devoting the same discipline and self-sacrifice to nonviolent peacemaking that armies devote to war."

I have been on a CPT delegation and have experienced two teams at work. These are courageous people who don't push their own agenda but partner with those already there working to diffuse violence and increase understanding between adversaries. They demonstrate alternative ways to deal with conflict and model respectful relationships, working to undo oppressions and support just treatment for all God's children.

There is already much interdenominational participation in this movement, and that is welcome. CPT could use many more participants and cannot fill the requests that come to them. It needs more of us who believe we are called to be peacemakers as children of God to hear and respond to the call.

If we believe God's Spirit is active in all of us, it shouldn't take an unusual effort by our leaders to move us to action.—*Mary Ellen Meyer, Goshen, Ind.*

Ron Sider asks top Mennonite leadership to lead an expansion of Christian Peacemaker Teams (Oct. 7). But his article outlines why relying on church leadership will not work. CPT got its start due to a "small group of peace activists who were largely at the margins of the Mennonite world." Sider does not indicate what may have changed in the intervening years.

In fact, he gives an example of why Mennonite and CPT leaders are not good partners in such an expansion. He asserts that "some of [CPT's] actions demonstrate a clear pro-gay stand," then adds, "this would have to change" to make CPT "more friendly to the center of the Mennonite church." I beg to differ.

It's reasonable that those who volunteer to witness for peace are not inclined to use sexual orientation as a reason to exclude potential participants. As they put their lives on the line, CPT members need to know their group members are committed to sharing the love of Jesus through nonviolent witness. Other considerations are secondary.

Playing to the center of the church and the divisive membership issues that continue to exclude faithful Christians from fully participating in local congregations and churchwide ministries can only dilute CPT. If Mennonite leaders choose to work with CPT to expand its witness, they should leave the selection of participants and the management of the teams to the CPT leaders who have already proven they have the courage, vision and commitment to place faithful peace witnesses into areas of conflict.—*Jeni Hiett Umble, Indianapolis*

A contrarian view of consumption

Al Doerksen ("A Contrarian View of Anticonsumption Rhetoric," Oct. 21) makes some good points, but unless we come up with new sources of inexpensive fuel, won't we all have to reduce our consumption of goods that have to be transported over great distances? This will require some adjustments that won't likely happen overnight. But happen they must if the planet is to survive. Starting now can allow everyone to begin adapting before it is too late and without the dire consequences for producers, processors and transporters Doerksen fears.—*Harvey Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Good fiction teaches us to be empathetic

I was pleased to read that Gordon Houser, in "How Good Fiction Reflects God's Perfect Love" (Oct. 21), enjoyed Marilynne Robinson's new novel, *Home*. It is waiting on a shelf in my home to be read. I enjoyed *Gilead* so much that I asked for *Home* as a birthday gift. Good fiction, like other great art (music, painting) should teach us to be empathetic and should broaden our minds.
—*Gloria Swartzendruber, Pigeon, Mich.*

Home Sunday schooling for those who miss

Wilbert Shenk (Readers Say, Sept. 16) said, "The cultural undertow is taking its toll." The home is a key link in Christian education. I suggest home Sunday schooling afterward for when a child is involved with sports, vacation or other community activities that keep him or her from Sunday school. Teachers should help parents with lesson plans. When the child returns late in the quarter, they have not lost out. Public schools must meet standards, so why shouldn't our Sunday schools?—*Carley Brubaker, Williamsburg, Va.*

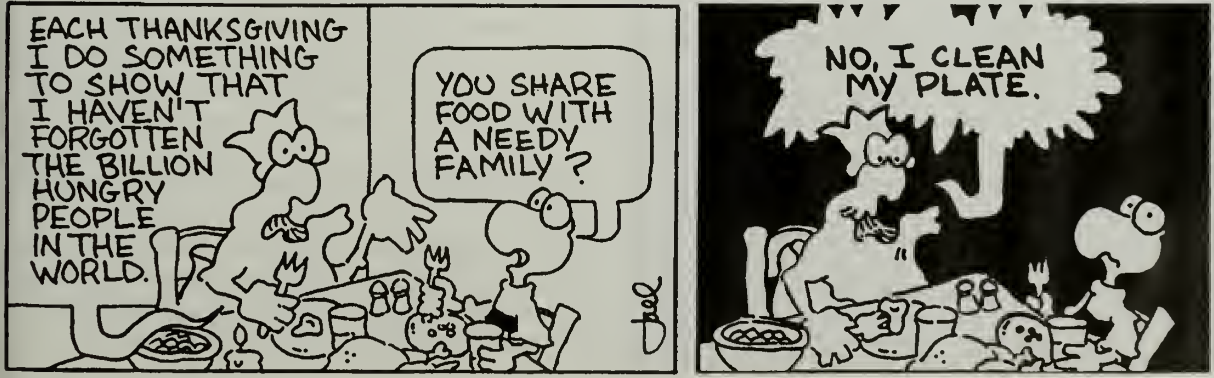
ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Young adults are involved in my congregation's life: (42 votes)

○ Significantly (67%)
○ Slightly (29%)
○ Not at all (2%)
○ Not sure (2%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


EACH THANKSGIVING I DO SOMETHING TO SHOW THAT I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THE BILLION HUNGRY PEOPLE IN THE WORLD.
YOU SHARE FOOD WITH A NEEDY FAMILY?
joel
NO, I CLEAN MY PLATE.

IN BRIEF

Leaving church

Poland's Catholic Bishops' Conference has for the first time issued guidelines for dealing with Catholics who wish to renounce their baptism and leave the church. "The duty to stay in communion with the church is violated in the most radical way by a Catholic who carries out an act of separation from the church community, either as an apostate who totally rejects the Christian faith or as a schismatic who refuses to recognize the supremacy of the bishop of Rome," the bishops said. The procedures for leaving the church include putting the intention in writing and getting as witnesses to it a parish priest and two other adults. The priest is supposed to inform a defector that the consequences of leaving are being barred from the sacraments and Catholic marriage and burial (ENI). —*Christian Century*

MMA, MAX, credit union offices open in Kidron, Ohio

Mennonite Mutual Aid, MAX (Mutual Aid eXchange) and Mennonite Financial Federal Credit Union opened offices in Kidron, Ohio. The arrangement among the Anabaptist organizations puts faith-based financial services, insurance and banking at one address on 4136 Kidron Road. Some people are members of two or three of the organizations. —*MMA*

CPT Hebron project closes after 13 years

HEBRON, West Bank—Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) has decided to close the Hebron team site, wrote Palestine Support Coordinator Tarek Abuata Oct. 10. "We have been suffering with an inadequate number of full-time CPTers on this team for months," he wrote. "Stretched thin, we covered the work of the Hebron team site with reservists until August, knowing that this option was not sustainable."

CPT began its Hebron presence in 1995. "Palestinians say, 'whoever lives 40 days with a community becomes one of them.' We've spent more than 4,000 days in Hebron, and we've always felt the incredible love and hospitality of the Palestinian community," Abuata wrote.

CPT continues to be committed to Palestine, Abuata wrote. A strong CPT project in At-Tuwani works with the Palestinian communities of the Southern Hebron Hills in their nonviolence efforts. A committee is exploring possibilities for collaborating with other Palestinian nonviolent efforts.—*CPT*

Oxford Circle plans to purchase new space

PHILADELPHIA—Oxford Circle Mennonite Church, a Lancaster Mennonite Conference church in Philadelphia and a Franconia Conference Partner in Mission, seeks to purchase a $3.55 million, 40,000-square-foot commercial building across the street from its current location.

The new building will use 10,000 square feet to house larger sanctuary and Sunday school space for the congregation and expand the development association ministries. The remaining space will be leased to community service organizations. Oxford Circle Christian Community Development Association met its Sept. 30 goal to raise over $100,000 for the purchase, according to Lyndaker-Studer, executive director of OCCCDA.

An additional $100,000 needed to be pledged by Nov. 14 for the financing commitment letter. The closing date is scheduled for Jan. 9, 2009.

OCCCDA originally estimated $500,000 for renovations but received a bid this month for only $150,000, said Lyndaker-Studer.—*Laurie Oswald Robinson and Anna Groff*

Bolivian Bible Society

New focus on oral Scripture: God speaks Pilagá

Estefania Sosa reads the part of Jesus' mother, Mary, for the Pilagá oral Scripture cassettes. Byrdalene and Willis Horst, who serve Mennonite Mission Network, have worked in the Argentine Chaco since 1971. Instead of planting Mennonite churches, they offer Bible-centered ministries that affirm an authentically indigenous expression of faith.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

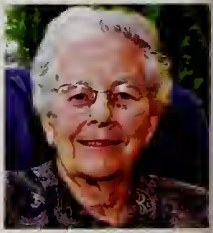
MHS Alliance receives $30,000 grant

GOSHEN, Ind.—A $30,000 grant from the Friends Foundation for the Aging will help MHS Alliance member organizations incorporate Anabaptist values more strongly into their corporate identity and daily practice, announced MHS Alliance President and CEO Rick Stiffney Oct. 22.

The grant will support MHS Alliance member organizations in four key ways: help members better understand Anabaptist theology, refine statements of core values that express Anabaptist beliefs, develop assessment tools for measuring employee practices that reflect core beliefs and assist administrators in strengthening the Anabaptist identity of the organizations they lead. —*MHS Alliance*

Speaker on Heart to Heart dies at age 93

HARRISONBURG, Va.—For 18 years, Ella May Weaver Miller's voice flowed over the airwaves, touching listeners of the Mennonite radio program Heart to Heart.



Ella May Weaver Miller

Miller, 93, died Oct. 26 in Harrisonburg following an extended illness.

From 1958 to 1976, Miller was the speaker on Heart to Heart, a 15-minute weekly and five-minute daily program that at its height aired on more than 250 stations. The program, produced by Mennonite Media, a department of Mennonite Mission Network, spawned more than 200 Heart to Heart local fellowships—gatherings of listeners who discussed the programs.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Young men bike to Paraguay 2009, raise funds

HARRISONBURG, Va.—For BikeMovement Americas 2009, Lars Åkerson and Jonathan Spicher will bike from Harrisonburg to the Global Youth Summit and Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Asunción, Paraguay, July 2009.

MCC photo

ennonite Central Committee responds to Nepal floods

rne Budha indicates the height of recent flooding in Tikapur unicipality in western Nepal. Mennonite Central Committee appealing for donations of 7,000 blankets for 3,500 families western Nepal whose homes and belongings were stroyed by flooding in September.—*MCC*

Åkerson attends Harrisonburg Mennonite Church and the Early Church, both in Harrisonburg. Spicher attends Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg. Jon studies biology (premed) at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, and Åkerson graduated from EMU last year.

They will begin the 7,000-mile trip in January 2009 and will update an interactive Web site along their route. People are welcome to join the touring group for sections of the ride.

A map of the route, which passes through the southeastern United States, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay, is available at http://americas.bikemovement.org.

BikeMovement Americas hopes to raise $30,000 to help emerging young leaders from around the world attend the summit in Paraguay. AMIGOS (MWC youth committee) has raised more than $75,000 toward this goal, but $30,000 remains. More information is at http://americas.bikemovement.org/give.—*BikeMovement Americas 2009*

MCC Central States assists after raid

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee Central States provided food and financial support to assist families affected by an Aug. 25 immigration raid in Laurel, Miss. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel detained 595 suspected undocumented workers at a manufacturing plant in the largest single-workplace immigration raid in U.S. history.

Two months after the raid, most of the workers remain in detention awaiting deportation or criminal charges related to identity theft, according to Ed Esguerra, director of Hispanic ministries for Central United Methodist Church in Meridian, Miss.—*Mennonite Central Committee*

Pax documentary premieres on Hallmark

HARRISONBURG, Va.—The story of Pax, an Anabaptist-based service program that ran from 1951 to 1975, will premiere on Hallmark Channel Nov. 23 (7 a.m. ET/PT, 6 a.m. CT/MT).

The hour-long *Pax Service: An Alternative to War* documentary, produced by Mennonite Media, a program of Mennonite Mission Network, is about the 1,200 young volunteers who did relief and development work in 40 countries around the world, many paying their own way.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

MCC responds to crisis in eastern Congo

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is accepting financial contributions to provide relief to people affected by violence in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Armed conflict escalated rapidly in late October as a rebel group attacked the Congolese Army and advanced toward Goma in eastern Congo. About 800,000 people had already been displaced by longstanding conflicts in the region, and an additional 250,000 people were displaced in recent weeks, according to MCC staff members.

The fighting has renewed fears that conflict in eastern Congo could spiral into an international war involving Congo's neighbors, as it did in 1998.

MCC is helping provide food and basic supplies to displaced people through the Church of Christ in Congo, a national council of churches, which is known by its French acronym ECC.

The Democratic Republic of Congo has one of the largest Mennonite populations in the world, with about 216,000 members in three denominations. Congolese Mennonite denominations are members of ECC.

Most Congolese Mennonites live in the western region of the country, and only one Mennonite congregation exists in eastern Congo, according to Suzanne Lind, MCC's Congo representative. —*MCC*

—*compiled by Anna Groff*

IN BRIEF

Hesston President Keim reappointed

The Hesston (Kan.) College Board of Overseers has reappointed Howard Keim as president of Hesston College for a second term. Keim officially began serving Jan. 1, 2005, and the next four-year term will begin Jan. 1, 2009.—*Hesston College*

Forty-two college students

Bethesda Mennonite Church in Henderson, Neb., wants their college students to stay in touch with Mennonite Church USA while they are away at school. The congregation bought a student subscription of *The Mennonite* (October through April) for each of their 42 college students. Bethesda is a member of the Central Plains Mennonite Conference and has 1,133 members.—*Everett J. Thomas*

MEDA awarded in Ontario

Mennonite Economic Development Associates was one of three finalists in the NGO category for the 2008 Ontario Innovation Excellence Awards held Oct. 29 in Kitchener, Ont. MEDA was nominated for its leadership in creating a global microfinance industry.—*MEDA*

Many worry Mennonite Church USA members are becoming older, and membership is becoming fewer. Here are seven young adults who are committed to their congregations—whether the one they grew up in or one they found after moving to a new city.

Why are you committed to your congregation?

How important is it to you that your congregation is Mennonite?

Mark Diller, Lebanon (Ore.) Mennonite Church
Leading up to my now 30 years of age were several transitio times at which I could have made different decisions, yet I acknowledge the foundational experiences that have influer my commitment to the Mennonite church. Ironically, my sen undergraduate research was on cultural trends in church att dance, and now I share about my own.

The March 13, 1990, Hesston, Kan., tornado occurred at a time in my formative years. I saw devastation yet also witnes what's possible when God's people come together to comfo heal and restore. I observed the compassion of those who ga their time to help with Mennonite Disaster Service. The expe ence influenced me to do likewise when subsequent tornad hit locally, which also reinforced to me that faith needs to be active.

My family, my hometown, Hesston, and experiences at Hesston College provided an environment in which I could g as a Christian. This environment was a constant in my life un

Young adult in church

Seven yo and how

Supplied

Katie Friesen, Lebanon (Ore.) Mennonite Church
While building a relationship with someone, I seek that vital characteristic that c only be described as "being real." Being real is a growth process that includes lot love and even some pain. As in the children's book *The Velveteen Rabbit*, the shin ness is worn off the surface, and what's inside is put to the test. It is a love that c tinues even after the newness wears off.

What does that have to do with our church body? We are a bunch of real, sinc people—no fake "churchiness" required. We treat each other as family, helping e other not just spiritually but during times of difficulty and joy. I love witnessing t congregation's generosity in raising money for a cause or hearing about farmers helping work another's fields because that farmer is ill or their equipment is una

Janet Trevino-Elizarraraz, San Antonio (Texas) Mennonite Church, Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Vida, San Antonio
My family and I have made this choice to attend a Mennonite church for our lives, and we believe God has led us here. My husband and I have fulfilled four of the seven sacraments (I was raised in the Roman Catholic Church). I have attended an evangelical Bible school for my bachelor's and master's degrees. We have been Roman Catholic and Protestant, not knowing we would finally find our home among the radical reformers.

Unfortunately, with the excitement being a part of this marginalized community, I face difficulty calling myself Mennonite. t's easy to connect this title to ethnicity and culture. At times I eel uncomfortable because my presence may be seen as mposing or, worse, presuming that they speak to my Mexican-merican culture. I hope I'm not alone in hoping Mennonite goes beyond the heritage of Russian or Swiss, a certain music tyle or potlucks. I hope that when we say we're Mennonite, our ommon values are clear and our comfortable lives are challenged daily. I'm looking for a relevant faith, and I believe I have found one—one that upholds peace, community, simplicity, justice, hospitality, service and, ultimately, Jesus as our source of life and reason for living and dying.

From an outsider, the Mennonite faith is truly different and life-changing. After many years of struggling to develop a sound set of beliefs, I've found a community that has taught me it isn't about doctrine but about a way of life. As much as I could have boasted about knowing about Jesus with a degree in Bible and theology, now I can say my life is beginning to reflect my faith walk.

I appreciate the story of Mennonites—a suffering, migrant people risking their lives to follow Jesus and loving their enemies. We have a cloud of witnesses whose faithfulness challenges our complacency. My church reminds me I am not alone in this journey. I miss the sacredness and quiet holiness of the Roman Catholic Church, and I miss the fervor and excitement of my evangelical brothers and sisters, but it is here that I have found Jesus, my wonderful shepherd, as I go.

wo years after my graduation from Hesston College. In 2000, I
noved to Salem, Ore., to marry Denise. This was the first time I
as away from my home for any extended period and the first
me I needed to make a decision about church. Denise and I
uickly decided we needed to engage in a church family. It wasn't
t a decision of if but which Mennonite congregation to attend.
'e attended Lebanon Mennonite, where we were married. We
oon became members and were encouraged to use our gifts,
hich were mostly in music. Then we were called to Service
dventure leadership for two years, and since then I have been
n elder.

I don't have a concrete answer as to why I have remained
tive in the Mennonite church, but it's not all by my doing. It's a
mbination of experiences, support and encouragement by my
ngregation and choices to contribute to community.
though church life isn't always easy, opportunities to grow
oser to each other through challenging times are practical
minders of what it means to be a Christian.

Denise Diller

want peace, family

ults say why they are committed to their congregations
tant it is that they be Mennonite.

e. I have learned the importance of serving others, a value
t makes us stand apart from other congregations.
Our pastor, "Mr. Energy Himself," Brent Kauffman, is such
approachable and sincere guy. He has a knack for reach-
out to people and showing God's love in a down-to-earth
nner. The so-called "senior members" of our church know
v to enjoy life. Every generation has something to offer,
I I have many role models in this family of believers.
'he label "Mennonite" isn't essential to selecting a church,
the values held by Mennonite churches are what keep
coming back. I do not want to conform to the norms of the world and accept society's messages. Considering the U.S. political situation, I appreciate being part of a group of people that chooses peace over power. Although I could continue to be a pacifist and not attend a Mennonite church, I like gathering in prayer for peace, like the Bible asks us to do.

Pastor Brent often reminds us to be the hands and feet of Jesus during our daily lives. It seems to me the people who have become my extended family at Lebanon Mennonite accomplish this in remarkable ways. We aren't perfect, the shininess has worn off over the years, but we still demonstrate an amazing Christlike love for each other.

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

Roxy Allen, Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church

The first thing I do after starting a new job in a new city is check out the local Mennonite church. The first Sunday I judge three things: Are these people crazy? How was I welcomed? Do I fit in here? If these three things check out, I go back another Sunday. I also take in the sermon, people's dress and which hymns we sing. If I'm lucky, I will build relationships with people I have things in common with, like career goals or work with Mennonite Central Committee. If I'm really lucky, I'll form a relationship with the pastor(s) that can be my rock through hard times. So far I've been really lucky in both San Francisco and Washington, the two U.S. cities I have lived in since graduating from Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., in 2004.

I developed a mentor-mentee relationship with Sheri Hostetler, the pastor of First Mennonite Church of San Francisco. We met to dream and scheme and even half-started to plan a conference for young adults and their mentors but never got it off the ground. Our notes were drawn up on the paper tablecloths at the local Italian cafe. Maybe the conference will happen eventually, but regardless, the process drew the two of us together. I felt I could talk to her about anything.

I moved to D.C. after two years in San Francisco and found Hyattsville Mennonite Church, a welcoming group. A bunch of us played "full contact" Dutch Blitz on the national mall, which was fun. One of the pastors, Adam Tice, happens to be from my home community in Springs, Pa., and I enjoyed connecting with him by tackling each other over giant Dutch Blitz cards.

Life in your 20s brings so many new challenges—a demanding professional life to manage, supporting yourself financially for the first time, ailing grandparents, new cities, friends and, for some, marriage and children. If I am lucky, which I have been so far, I can find a church that will support me in this decade as I move from city to city to accomplish my goals in life. If I am really lucky, I will continue to find emotionally healthy, self-differentiated pastors who offer me guidance and build relationships. I am figuring out how difficult life can be, so to have a healthy church community to de-stress, gain perspective on life and remember that I am part of God's great plan has been invaluable.

Leah Rice, Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie, Pa.

I have called Deep Run Mennonite Church East home for more than 25 years. The congregation at Deep Run East has fostered my spiritual, emotional and educational growth. From Sunday school teachers and Christmas play leaders to fellow youth groupers, volunteer leaders and pastors—Deep Run East has supported me through some of the best and worst times of my life.

Looking back on my time in MYF, I now realize how crucial the social and spiritual outlet was in helping mold me into the person I am. Having a group of friends—all from different area schools and all dealing with the same social pressures while trying to keep God at the center of life—was amazingly reassuring and affirming. Also, the adults in the church offered their answers to difficult life and spiritual questions. It's my personal commitment to help spread the word of God and his grace through my membership and volunteerism at Deep Run East. I want to pass along the same values and unconditional love I experienced.

So many know so little about the Mennonite faith and what it means. Growing up a Mennonite, I took it for granted and am now grasping more what it means to be a Mennonite. I hear and read so much about how Mennonites are making a difference and showing people God's grace through service, pacifism and social justice education.

Service and a focus on peace have always been a large part of my life. I was part of a Deep Run East outreach project helping a local family build a much-needed rehabilitation room in their home. Seeing God's work in pulling the right resources (local businesses, supplies and volunteers) together, seeing the difference it has made in this family's life and hearing their appreciative words reaffirmed the importance of being a Mennonite and a follower of Christ.

In February 2007, I participated in a Deep Run East-organized MAMA Project mission trip to Honduras. Initially I was hesitant to travel to such a different culture. However, during the trip I saw God's grace in even the smallest acts of kindness—joy in the children's faces while playing soccer, blowing bubbles and coloring; hugs of appreciation from mothers accepting parasite medication and vitamins; receiving gracious words and gifts from village members and more. The trip was one of the most eye-opening and spiritually renewing experiences of my life and helped ground me in the purpose of our Mennonite faith.

Nikki Aeschliman, Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio

I am committed to my home congregation, Lockport Mennonite Church, because it has always been my family. I feel welcomed and at home when I go to church. Lockport has always strived to provide an exciting, safe and nurturing atmosphere for its children. Our church loves its children, and its children love the church. This is evident through the Sunday school, Bible school and Mennonite Youth Fellowship (MYF) programs as well as how the church welcomes infants.

Throughout my high school years, MYF was an exciting place to grow, learn, serve others and make friendships. When my husband, Chad, and I had our first child several months ago, the church welcomed little Creighton with a freezer full of food, prayers and unending support. I am committed to Lockport because I want the younger generations to have positive experiences at church and because I want to do my part to thank the older generations for the love and support they have given me.

The church's stance on social justice issues as well as nonviolence are important to me. Like many young adults, I am interested and involved in today's politics. In a time when it seems politics and religion are one and the same, I find it surprising that many Mennonites support politicians who stand for violence and social injustice. Historically, the Mennonite church has been known as a strong community that cares for all, and I want to be a part of that. As Mennonites we are called to help and live in peace with others.

Supplied

Supplied

A young pastor's perspective

Zion Mennonite Church in Archbold, Ohio, was an integral part of my family's life. While much of this church experience was focused on biblical teachings and worship, I also gained a strong sense of community. Zion was a safe place to ask questions, to try out various leadership skills and to learn what it means to be a part of church community. This congregation gave me the chance to test my skills as a pastor, first through the Ministry Inquiry Program in college and later as the interim youth pastor and Christian education director upon graduation. I felt support from Zion when I entered seminary and continue to feel it.

Zion provided a positive model that ever since has compelled me to search for other Mennonite congregations that remind of me of Zion Mennonite. I have found this as well in my current congregation, Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

What I look for is a place that feels like home, where all ages are represented in the congregation and in leadership. Everyone works alongside each other to build up the church. Upon finding a congregation that feels like home, I find my family, even though my relatives may be many miles away.

As I have left my home congregation, searching for that congregation to call home has not always been quick or easy. Focusing on churches that are Mennonite has helped. My Mennonite heritage gives me a sense of where I fit in the world. Growing up, I heard stories ranging from *Martyrs' Mirror* to my father's time in voluntary service during the Vietnam War. These stories shaped my identity. Attending a Mennonite church makes sense for me, since being Mennonite is a part of my identity, just as being a white, North American, young adult female is. The threads of Mennonite commonality transcend city or locale and give Mennonite congregations an advantage.

However, this is not the only reason I look for Mennonite congregations. I am strongly committed to the Mennonite faith and believe the Mennonite church has something to offer the rest of the world. Visitors to our congregation are often struck by the concept of the "priesthood of all believers." For those coming from a hierarchal church background, the idea that we are called to be priests sounds strange. The way Mennonites "do church" can be freeing to those used to a high-church tradition.

I am a part of a Mennonite congregation because it has become an essential part of my life. This is from more than my heritage; it wells up from my sense that in following Jesus' example we can help bring heaven to earth. As Mennonites we offer the world a reworking of violence and conflict, simplicity in a needy society, a kinder, gentler sense of community, creation care and justice, to name a few. Mennonite Church USA is my family and my congregation an extension of me.—*Rachel Ringenberg Miller, associate pastor at Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church*

How to get connected with our young adults

Unclutt

by Lori Leaman

Vada Snider

Joanna Shenk converses with Alan Kreider, associate professor of church history and mission, AMBS.

Connectivity is a term that describes not only the wired state of this Internet generation but the desire of our young adults to become deeply connected to the Mennonite church and God's global world. "Continue to walk with us and mentor us," was the call of our young adults in Mennonite Church USA as they presented their testimony to the delegate assembly at San José in July 2007. How can we nurture this younger generation to fulfill their desire to "live the call" of God in their lives?

Generation Y, or Gen Y, is the name often used to describe those young people born between 1980 and 2000. As a professor at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, Va., I have the privilege of learning from and with this vibrant generation, the Gen Ys. The youth and young adults of Generation Y are often described in the literature as supreme team players, multitaskers, digitally connected, holding high expectations for self and others, and fiercely loyal. These descriptors expanded with breath and life as I read the young adult statement to the delegate assembly at San José. Generation Y is not only the future of Mennonite Church USA but the present church as well. Am I—or we as a church—doing all we can to nurture this generation so that they not only hear the call but become equipped to live it?

Gen Ys seek ways to become adults connected not only to digital media but to service in their future world.

We need their call to leap boundaries: As the most ethnically diverse generation in the United States, Gen Y has remained digitally connected 24/7, around the globe. Born into a culture of ethnic, racial and socioeconomic diversity, Gen Ys are often described as authentic team players with an incredible acceptance for differences. They are slow to judge others. We in Mennonite Church USA were reminded by the messages at San José that as a church we must not hide our spiritual treasure but learn to share it with others, leaping boundaries of language, culture and experience.

From their own voice: "We come from varied walks of life … we have built relationships that transcend geography … we desire an openness and hospitality across age, race, gender, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status" (Young Adults, San José Assembly). Mennonite Church USA needs this rare gift that Gen Y has to offer. How can we nurture their calling to unity?

We need their call to integrity and heart service: Raised in a generation of violence, political upheaval and economic uncertainty, Gen Ys have witnessed a lifetime of tragedy and crisis before the age of 20. Witnessing the self-destruction of the integrity of countless national heroes and top political leaders, our young adults are often characterized by a high social consciousness and a strong desire to find authenticity and integrity in others. Raised in schools that emphasized service as the fourth R, Gen Ys seek ways to become adults connected not only to digital media but to service in their future world. Generation Y seeks to live the call of authenticity.

From their own voice: "We want a church that practices its beliefs with consistency and integrity. … Some of us are connected to our home congregations, and others are finding it hard to connect to any congregation … we want more ways to get involved in the church, both in local congregations and at broader organizational levels. … We seek community." Mennonite Church USA needs the rare gift that Gen Y has to offer. How can we nurture their calling?

We need their call to hope and community: This generation has also been raised by parents who

ering the call

have been highly involved in the lives of their children, creating a strong sense of family, community and opportunity. Gen Ys are positive, energetic and collaborative, bringing hope to this world. Raised by parents and teachers who have taught them that anything is within their grasp, our young adults carry a collective energy and zest for a future that is not limited by boundaries of the church's past experiences or failures.

From their own voice: "We are seekers in our faith and full of complex questions … we desire the church community to be a place where we can grapple with complex questions, realities and issues without preconceived outcomes. … Young adults have been called the future of the church. We come before you today to say that the future has already begun." Mennonite Church USA needs the rare gift that Gen Y has to offer. How can we nurture their calling?

Can it be that we have failed to help our young people discover their true God-given gifts?

They need our nurture: The students who walk through the doors of the Campus Center of EMU or any of our churches are not lacking a drive to become engaged with their brothers, the widows and orphans, their neighbors or their enemies. On the contrary, our young people have been so well trained that they engage in almost every opportunity that comes their way. Christ modeled the invitation for us to "go ye into the world," and we, the parents and elders of Gen Y, have created opportunity after opportunity for our children and youth to do just that. For many of us, our adult lives have been centered on giving our children every opportunity so that they may choose the future they desire.

But is the "provision of opportunity" the equivalent of nurture or of Christ's model of "sending" into the world? I sit in my office with yet another student, and I do not often hear a lament that opportunities are limited. Rather, I hear the voice of a young person crying out, not for more opportunity or affirmation, but for true nurture … for the "leading" of God to begin to be revealed through a trusted adult. Can it be that we have failed to help our young people discover their true God-given gifts? That we have tried to assist them in becoming good at everything, but "called" to nothing? Many of Christ's commands to his disciples assisted them in seeing their own weakness and in sensing the hand of God tapping them on the shoulder for the next, specific task. I was a young person in the Mennonite Church who was "tapped on the shoulder" by God through the members of His body. I have been given a multitude of opportunities; however, they have been the result of true nurture in which others have seen something specific in me that I might turn over to God for His purposes.

Our young people note that we have given them countless opportunities, but that we may be failing to name their individual gifts, a step necessary for transitioning from hearing, to living, the call: "We have been offered spaces … We are thankful for the leadership we have been given … We struggle with the tension between opportunities … Continue to walk with us and mentor us through our questions … Help us recognize our God-given gifts and talents."

We need to unclutter his call together: Our children and young adults are already a generation that value authenticity. Authenticity, integrity and openness, however, are grounded in the act of first identifying and then honoring, the beautiful uniqueness of each child of God. I have been afraid at times to name the gifts that I see in a young person, fearing that I might impinge on a young adult's opportunity to choose who he will become. Thankfully, our youth have taught me that this fear is not of God. As I have had the courage to embark on a journey with a young adult and with God, my Father has given me the courage to identify gifts and to raise questions that allow the young person to seek and discover the boundaries, the specifics, of God's calling. When I have had the courage to "name" an authentic gifting, to shoulder-tap, or to ask the hard questions of a young adult, I have seen our young people soar towards God, instead of toward ever-increasing opportunities. May we cast out all fear and step forward in faith to unclutter the call of our young people, so that they may become authentically connected to God's will on their lives, not just connected to more opportunities.

Lori Leaman is an assistant professor of teacher education at Eastern Mennonite University and is a member of Park View Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Va.

Correction: Katie Funk Wiebe, who wrote "Enough Is Enough" (Oct. 21), lives in Wichita, Kan., not Hillsboro, Kan.

A seat

The place of Mennonite youth and young adults in the Mennonite church

by Justin James King

Peter Ringenberg

Justin King

I have heard it said time and time again that Mennonite young people are leaving the Mennonite church for other activities. I have also heard many solutions to this problem, everything from offering similar programs within the church to keeping our church camps open. However, most of these "solutions" are only treating the symptoms; they are not offering real solutions because the "movers and shakers" in the church are not looking at what the problem is. The problem as I, a 22-year-old who is committed to his church, see it is the patronizing attitude of the church toward all its young people. There is no place for us in the church. Sure we are more than welcome to attend Sunday worship and Sunday school, but that is about as far as our involvement goes for people my age. I think we young people have much more to bring to the table and give the church than is currently the case. I want to call the older generations to give us a seat at the table, and I want youth and young adults to have the courage to take the seat at that table.

We young people of Mennonite Church USA are trapped in certain roles from which we are not given room to deviate. In junior high and high school it feels like we are a separate congregation. Sure, we are not sent off to a separate room like the toddlers and small children during the worship service, but in terms of participation in the service and in the governance of the congregation there is little room for us. Other than doing music or a drama once in a while and filling a seat or two on a few committees, we do not have a voice of our own in the church. We do our own mission trips and fund-raisers, and at the national level we have our own convention and do not have a clue about what the adults are doing, about the decisions being made that affect our church.

During college it is difficult for us to be too involved because of temporary status everywhere we go, never really living anywhere for more than four months. Yet we become more aware of the comings and goings of those in positions of authority in the church. This is especially true for those of us who went or are going to Mennonite institutions of higher education, where countless conferences, meetings and annual assemblies take place. There is a wealth of untapped talent in our young adults, both those who went to college and those who did not.

The young people of Mennonite Church USA cannot sit around waiting for something to happen.

This talent is untapped because of the high value placed on experience in Mennonite Church USA. The church seems to be run in a businesslike manner in which the one with the most

at the table

experience gets the job. While there is much to be said for experience, it has its own problems. People with a lot of experience can become set in their ways or cynical. Young people can bring a fresh perspective, youthful energy and optimism that many of the more experienced cannot. We can offer questions and answers that the more experienced may not be able to. Even if the issues we raise or the questions we ask do not get implemented, as John Howard Yoder once noted, it is sometimes enough to question assumed truths.

The young people of Mennonite Church USA cannot sit around waiting for something to happen. We must also be willing to step out and assert ourselves in constructive ways. We must not be too overawed by those with experience, which is easier said than done. Being a Christian is not about doing the easy thing. We must be willing to stand up and say we will not be ignored, that we have much to bring to the table.

Is there any biblical foundation for such a call? There is biblical evidence of the power of young people. In 1 Samuel 2:18 we see young Samuel "ministering before the Lord." In 1 Samuel 3, the Lord God calls this young boy. Yet it is his mentor Eli who helps him recognize the voice of God and how to respond appropriately. It takes both a youth and an old man to spread the word of God (see 1 Samuel 3:1-4.1a). Later in 1 Samuel we see another youth being chosen by God, David. In 1 Samuel 16, Samuel is sent to Jesse the Bethlemite, for the Lord had "provided … a king among [Jesse's] sons" (1 Samuel 16:1).

In Jeremiah 1:4-5 the Lord God calls Jeremiah to be a "prophet to the nations," but Jeremiah protests, saying, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy" (Jeremiah 1:6). However, he is rebuked by the Lord, who tells him not to say that, for Jeremiah will go to whom he is sent by God and will speak whatever he is commanded, for God had "put [God's] words into [Jeremiah's] mouth" (Jeremiah 1:7-9). The prophet Joel notes that God "will pour out [God's] Spirit on all flesh; [Israel's] sons and … daughters shall prophesy, [Israel's] old men shall dream dreams, and [Israel's] young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28). Peter uses this passage following Pentecost in Acts 2:17.

All these passages have in common that God will move as God wills and through whom God wills. We must all be open to the moving of the Spirit. Older generations must be willing to hear the prophetic and revelatory voice of God in the youth and young adults of the church and must be willing to give us a seat at the table where we can give voice to the word of God. And we young people must move as God so wills and not be afraid, for if we are doing the will of the Lord our God, God will be with us.

Older generations must be willing to hear the prophetic and revelatory voice of God in the youth and young adults of the church.

What does this look like? To be honest, I am not entirely sure. A good place to start is for the youth and young adults to willingly and constructively engage the older generations, and the older generations need to take seriously what the youth and young adults have to say and the gifts we have to offer.

I'm merely calling us to begin a conversation to find a way to give young adults a reason to remain active in the church. Some say young people are not interested in the church, but this is not true. Many people may be surprised at how many young people want to be more involved in the church, from the Mennonite Historical Committee to MEDA to working with hymns.

My prayer is that we young people are given an opportunity to be more involved in the church and that we young people who are called to be involved have the courage to serve faithfully the church and God.

Justin James King is a member of Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio, and a first-year student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

An evangelical peace an

by Matt Friesen

Young adults hunger for a church that holds together deep faith, active peace and social justice.

Everett Thomas

Rosy Guzman (keyboard) and Lupita Hernandez (guitar) lead worship at the House of Healing Mennonite Church in Dallas on Oct. 26.

An emphasis on peace and justice and evangelistic outreach can go hand in hand.

For the last few years U.S. Mennonites have heard a lot of conversation about the divide among our churches. Liberal and conservative, Democrat and Republican, red and blue, National Public Radio and Focus on the Family listeners. Real or perceived, this congregational "culture war" is often considered a result of the religiously polarized election of 2004, in which "moral issues" became not only a political topic but a controversial conversation among many Mennonite Church USA members. We members of the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference's peace and justice committee also sometimes find ourselves confounded with how to speak of "justice and peace" and "spirituality and faith" in the same sentence.

At an early meeting of our committee last year, we shared our faith journeys. One thing we found interesting is that few us grew up in a Mennonite congregation. Our group included an ex-Presbyterian, an ex-Church of the Nazarene, an ex-Catholic and an ex-Christian Missionary Alliance member. And over a five-year period, all of our new members came from other-than-Mennonite traditions. While it would be impossible to carry out our work without support from "lifelong Mennonites" who have invested in this ministry for many years, we have experienced some of the most enthusiastic support of our conference's peace and justice ministry from "new Mennonites."

Earlier this year, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (www.religions.pewforum.org) released results of a nationwide survey of Americans' religious life. One the most widely noted statistics was that 44 percent of Americans change their religious tradition while moving from childhood to adulthood. More than ever, our neighbors are searching for new ways to discover and express their faith.

In 2007, Conrad Kanagy in his *Road Signs for the Journey: A Profile of Mennonite Church USA* writes: "Racial/Ethnic congregations, more than other Mennonite congregations, effectively combine evangelistic outreach with social action. They do not appear to be torn between these two callings but live in contexts where they are daily faced with the realities that Jesus Christ is the answer both for broken individuals and for unjust social and political structures." These churches, sometimes described as the growing edge of Mennonite Church USA, seem uniquely aware of the evangelical dimension of a peace and justice church.

The delegate assembly in San José, Calif., in July 2007 enjoyed the active participation of young adults, and our Executive Leadership invited them to draft a summary statement of their visions for the church. Their reflections included a longing for a church where "social justice and a visible, active witness for peace are integral to our faith." Young adults, growing up in a rapidly changing social and technological whirlwind, hunger for a church that holds together deep faith, active peace and social justice.

At its meeting in March 2006, the General Council of Mennonite World Conference adopted as one of its seven Shared Convictions: "The Spirit of Jesus empowers us to trust God in all areas of life so we become peacemakers who renounce violence, love our enemies, seek justice and share our possessions with those in need." Our global Mennonite sisters and brothers recognize the evangelical power of a peace and justice church.

Last spring, one of our committee members shared about a conversation he had with a Lutheran pastoral colleague who seemed strangely curious about how Mennonite Church USA has been able to hold onto its peace and justice voice. He said that while some Lutherans are enthusiastic supporters of this dimension of ministry, he felt that as a result of becoming too affluent and willing to organize their church toward its traditional center rather than its growing edges it has lost its prophetic voice. "Don't let it go," he implored, "because once you loose your prophetic voice, it is hard to get it back." Some of our ecumenical sisters and brothers long for an evangelical peace and justice church.

If instead of seeing peace and justice ministries as an optional, tangential or controversial element of Mennonite Church USA's life, could our church's peace and justice commitment be a key to our evangelical future?

When we hear about plans for denominational reorganization and conversations about "scaling back," "right sizing" or making our fledgling denomination "more efficient," we hope we don't lose our focus on our church's Healing and Hope vision. We are not proposing a reckless "if you build it they will come" or a flippant "God will provide" financial or organizational strategy. We are suggesting that if we invest intentionally and courageously in our church's unique peace and justice ministry at this time in American history, it may well be the most hopeful missional venture and radically healing gift we have to offer our communities and world.

We encourage churches not to understand peace and justice ministry as a playground for radical protesters or evangelism ministry as the home of radical fundamentalists. If we learn from the experiences of our racial-ethnic sisters and brothers and muster the courage to listen across artificial ideological stereotypes put upon us by our nation's political culture, we may not only discover Christ's reconciling Spirit among our congregations but a powerful missional opportunity. Our neighbors would receive an evangelical peace and justice church as a refreshing faith option.

We encourage conferences to take advantage of their unique role as a network of local congregations and create relationships not only among peace and justice leaders but among rural and urban, outreach and church-planting coordinators. Local church planting efforts that grow out of local peace and justice issues proclaim that "Jesus Christ is the answer both for broken individuals and for unjust social and political structures."

A significant denominational, regional and congregational investment in our church's peace and justice ministry could be a great evangelical catalyst.

We encourage Mennonite Church USA to increase its financial, structural and personnel investment in the areas of peace and justice ministry as a part of an evangelical vision. Such efforts would be aimed at developing and supporting creative new local mission and outreach projects based on needs identified in communities that address local issues of justice and peace.

More than any single recommendation, we long for us to recognize the potential vision of an evangelical peace and justice church. A significant denominational, regional and congregational investment in our church's peace and justice ministry could be a great evangelical catalyst. When we look to the most vibrant edges of our church, take seriously the voices of our young adults, learn from the global church and talk with colleagues, neighbors and friends, we hear a longing for a church that has both the historical integrity and creative vision to be a peace and justice church for the 21st century.

Perhaps our vision statement describes us better than we think. Should we have the courage to allow God to heal the divides among us, perhaps we would discover anew Christ's message of hope for the world moving through us.

Matt Friesen, pastor of Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church, wrote this article, and the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference's peace and justice committee submitted it.

ustice church

On fences, Christ and a D.P.

L. Lamar Nisly is professor of English at Bluffton (Ohio) University and a member of Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.

In Robert Frost's famous poem "Mending Wall," the narrator's neighbor finds remarkably clever his assertion that "good fences make good neighbors." The neighbor would make an excellent candidate for the U.S. Congress, for our government has approved and is constructing a 700-mile dividing fence along the border with Mexico. But Frost's narrator is the person I would like to see in Congress, for he asserts:

"Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to
give offence."

Whenever I teach Bluffton (Ohio) University's Humanities 2 course, a sprawling romp through the last 500 years of history and literature, I emphasize to my students the importance of learning from the past, of placing our current hot topics in a larger context. In that light, I continue to be disturbed by the United States' construction of an enormous fence on our southern border.

The historical connotations of walls and fences are not promising. Have these separation barriers exemplified the essence of American values? Are the historical models of building walls and fences the ones we seek to emulate? Walls and fences were hallmarks of Nazi rule, as the Nazis separated Jews in reconstructed ghettos and fenced them inside concentration camps. One of the darkest episodes in our nation's history occurred during World War II, when 110,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans were detained behind barbed war because of America's war hysteria. A key memory I have from college is the unbridled euphoria we all felt as the icon of Cold War hostility, the Berlin Wall, came crashing down in 1989. When has a wall between nations or peoples been a positive step?

And yet we Americans, who claim to love freedom and opportunity, sit meekly as our government constructs a fence. The public, it seems, has little stomach for nuanced discussions concerning why Mexicans may be drawn to the United States, how the lure of the U.S. per capita income of $35,000 may seem an overwhelmingly tantalizing lure to a family struggling with an average Mexican income of $7,000. We seem uninterested in considering the possibilities of supporting real development in Mexico so that residents do not feel compelled to head north to earn enough to feed their families. Instead of debating methods to make legal immigration actually accessible in a timely manner, we build a wall.

As is true on so many subjects, Catholic author Flannery O'Connor's pungent writing provides a voice of sanity on this question. In her story "The Displaced Person," O'Connor portrays a farm woman, Mrs. McIntyre, who is persuaded by a priest to invite a World War II refugee to work on her farm. This Displaced Person, or D.P., is initially a welcomed worker for Mrs. McIntyre because of his work ethic and his quick learning. Eventually, though, Mrs. McIntyre sours on Mr. Guizac, just as she tires of hearing the priest speak to her about following Christ. In a wonderful line that continues to resonate in my mind, Mrs. McIntyre exclaims to the priest, "As far as I'm concerned, ... Christ was just another D.P."

In this comment we are brought out of the welter of confusion and hysteria about illegal immigration and come to the core of the issue. We begin to get an answer to Frost's narrator's inquiry about who is being walled in or out. The one we fear so intensely that we are building a 700-mile fence is the stranger, the Displaced Person, Christ. As we remember Mary and Joseph's wandering search for lodging for their soon-to-be-born baby, may we refocus our conversation on immigration with the knowledge that Christ was just another D.P.

Instead of debating methods to make legal immigration actually accessible in a timely manner, we build a wall.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Is Christianity about IQ?**—Karen Smucker
- **Christ-centered thinking**—Betsy Headrick McCrae

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

Enrollment down at colleges, universities

Bluffton University is the only higher education school with an increase.

Total enrollment—as calculated through the "full-time equivalency" (FTE) of students taking classes—in Mennonite Church USA colleges and universities is down 1.7 percent during the current school year compared with the 2007-2008 school year. However, full-time equivalency for student enrollment at the seminaries is up.

According to a preliminary report released by Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) on Nov. 5, only Bluffton (Ohio) University has an increase in both actual number of students enrolled and FTE. Last year Bluffton had a "headcount" of 886 part-time and full-time students, and this year the total is 906.

Bluffton's undergraduate enrollment is now the largest of the five Mennonite Church USA colleges and universities.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), in Elkhart, Ind., reported that its "headcount" decreased from 169 last year to 146 this year, but more of their students are enrolled full-time. That gives AMBS an increase from 84 FTE last year to 89 FTE this year.

Bethel College, in North Newton, Kan., saw the largest percentage drop in numbers as its "headcount" enrollment for the current school year is at 500, down from 541 last year.

"The biggest drop came in transfer numbers, down from a record 95 in 2007 to 51 [this year]," said a Bethel College statement released on Oct. 7. But the school got a boost from a larger incoming class. First year student numbers saw a 10.2 percent increase: This year's class is 130 compared with last year's incoming class of 118.

Enrollment at Hesston (Kan.) College is down seven students from last year's 432 and its FTE is down five from last year's 407.

Goshen (Ind.) College and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., each had an FTE decline of 20 from the previous school year. Goshen's "headcount" fell from 909 to 886. EMU's "headcount" fell from 896 to 884.

Goshen reported a high retention rate for existing students but has a first-year class of 215 compared with 252 last year. President Jim Brenneman attributed the first-year decline to a drop in the number of Mennonite students—113 this fall compared with 150 last year. He attributed the drop to a larger demographic shift within Mennonite Church USA families.

"While we are aware of this reality that has been impacting our enrollment for several decades," Brenneman said in a Sept. 18 release, "we will continue to reach out to Mennonite students as we also extend a wider welcome to the larger community."

MEA's report also tracks the number of Mennonite students in higher education schools. The percentage of Mennonite Church USA full-time students in the five colleges and universities increased from 40.8 percent last year to 41.6 percent this year. Goshen has the highest percentage of Mennonite Church USA full-time students with 57.7 percent this year. Bluffton has the lowest with 15.2 percent.

"For the long-term strength and vitality of our church," said MEA executive director Carlos Romero on Nov. 5, "we need to increase the number of Mennonite students attending our institutions.

"At the same time, we need to understand our schools are part of the missional church that reaches outside our congregations, a wonderful gift to share with the wider world. The context of the conversation needs to focus on serving the church and serving the world—it's a both/and conversation and not either/or," Romero said.

Our schools are part of the missional church that reaches outside our congregations.
—Carlos Romero

Because AMBS is owned by both Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA, MEA does not separate seminary enrollments from the two denominations. However, the combined numbers from AMBS and Eastern Mennonite Seminary show a decline in the percentage of their full-time students who come from Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. Last year this Mennonite percentage was 49.1 percent. This year it is 43.2 percent.

Students enrolled in degree-completion programs and graduate students are not included in the table (below).—*Everett J. Thomas*

Note: The complete MEA report is available at www.themennonite.org

Mennonite Church USA Higher Education Enrollment

	2007	2008	Change
Colleges and universities*			
Headcount	3,664	3,601	(63)
Full-time equivalency	3,501	3,447	(54)
Seminaries			
Headcount	296	258	(38)
Full-time equivalency	155	160	5

* Does not include degree-completion and graduate students
Source: Mennonite Education Agency

Persecution in India affects meetings

International Missions Association cancels meeting in India, but WMI held.

Photo provided

Students pray during the two-week India World Missions Institute cosponsored by Eastern Mennonite Missions and the Fellowship of Christian Assemblies, a new Anabaptist group in India.

As news of escalating anti-Christian persecution in India spread, the International Missions Association (IMA) cancelled its annual Holy Spirit in Mission Conference and regional outreaches.

Instead, a small cluster of 11 leaders of IMA met in Delhi, India, Sept. 29-Oct. 5, hosted by the Fellowship of Christian Assemblies, one of the IMA's 18 member organizations.

The group spent the first day in fasting and prayer for the church in India as well as for needs in their own lands.

"The government of India wants us to think we're a tiny minority," said P. C. Alexander (known as Alex), leader of the Fellowship of Christian Assemblies. "But with the Lord we are a majority. We are 'more than conquerors.'"

Alex noted that the violence had affected some of the 120 church planters who work with his organization in sensitive areas of north India. New believers in their circles had been forced to burn their Bibles and reconvert to Hinduism. There were community efforts to close down their headquarters. But in spite of this, Alex said, they had decided to quietly move ahead with a two-week World Missions Institute (WMI) for 106 cross-cultural workers from India, Nepal, North America and Europe, followed by the scaled-down IMA.

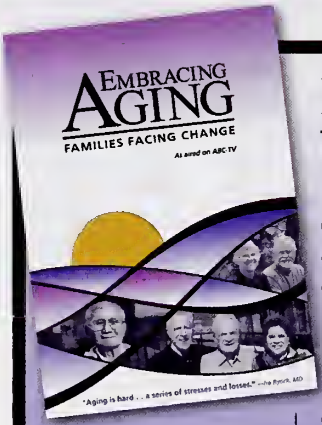
"The WMI—a vision which grew out of earlier IMA gatherings—is changing the way we look at Muslims here in India," he said. "After my first IMA meeting … God encouraged me to step out in fresh, cross-cultural initiatives. A meeting like this—with internationals who pray and share about missions together—is very unusual for India."

The two-week WMI, cosponsored by Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) and Fellowship of Christian Assemblies, was held Sept. 15-29. The training for cross-cultural missions rested on the wonder of the Incarnation.

A visit the group took to a mosque during the WMI module on world religions taught by David W. Shenk, a global consultant with EMM, was the first time most of them had ever set foot in a mosque.

The WMI group fasted and then broke the Ramadan fast with their Muslim hosts.

M.P. James, a WMI participant who works in the Punjab region of India, said: "There are many Muslims in Punjab, but I never considered reaching out them before. Now maybe I will. God is preparing all peoples, and we mustn't overlook Muslims because we afraid of them."—*Jewel Showalter of Eastern Mennonite Missions*



Embracing Aging

FAMILIES FACING CHANGE

Families, medical and gerontology experts, and others share insights on aging, housing choices, facing illness, and siblings caring for aging parents. Includes Paul and Marjorie Guengerich family of Harrisonburg, Va.

DVD includes documentary plus bonus content on: Role of the church; Driving; Choosing Housing; Assessing Needs; Cohousing

DVD just $24.95 *plus shipping*
Call: 800-999-3534
Online: Store.MennoMedia.org

Find more info at:
EmbracingAging.com

Mennonite Media
1251 Virginia Avenue
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
info@mennomedia.org
MennoMedia.org

"Distance learning classes at EMS create community with fingertips instead of faces. Pastoral care leaks out of the computer when students share their hearts and people pray."

Becky Hess
MDiv student, Lancaster Pa.

EASTERN MENNONITE SEMINARY
A Graduate Division of Eastern Mennonite University

1200 Park Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
(800) 710-7871
seminary@emu.edu
emu.edu/seminary

MCC launches major appeal for Sudan

Mennonite Central Committee to raise $20 million for war-torn country

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is launching a 10-year, multimillion-dollar campaign to help people in southern Sudan recover from a devastating civil war.

MCC's campaign, "Coming Home: Sudan," is focused on building schools, supporting education, assisting farmers and promoting peace in southern Sudan. MCC is seeking to raise $400,000 for southern Sudan by March 2009 with an eventual goal of raising $2 million per year through the campaign.

Sudan's 22-year civil war decimated communities in southern Sudan, which is one of the most impoverished regions in the world. About 2 million people were killed, and 4 million people were forced to flee their homes before a peace agreement ended the conflict in 2005.

Since then, about 1.7 million people have returned to their home areas after spending years in refugee camps or other temporary living arrangements. More people are continuing to arrive despite the fact that few resources exist, such as schools or food supplies, to accommodate the rapidly growing population.

MCC's "Coming Home: Sudan" campaign grows out of more than 35 years of partnership with Sudanese churches, according to Arli Klassen, MCC's executive director.

MCC and its mission partners have already begun the work of rebuilding. In June, Christian Ecumenical Action in Sudan completed the construction of six classrooms for two schools in Juba, southern Sudan's capital, with about $250,000 in funding from MCC. Earlier this year, MCC contributed $30,000 to provide the Juba Hospital with medical supplies and equipment.

MCC is also seeking to expand its staff in southern Sudan, according to Leroy Willems, an MCC Sudan representative from Glendale, Ariz. MCC has four workers in the region.—*Tim Shenk of Mennonite Central Committee*

Melissa Engle

Parkiela John and her children Manuel Gabriel and Mary Carda, near Rumbek, southern Sudan, are among the 1.7 million people who have returned to the region since 2005.

FULL-TIME LEAD PASTOR
Toronto United Mennonite Church

Toronto United Mennonite Church is an Anabaptist-Mennonite community of faith united in a call and desire to follow Jesus in life. We are a vibrant urban congregation of 200 members, located in the Beach neighbourhood of Toronto, North America's most multicultural city.

We seek a lead pastor beginning February 2009, to provide a balanced ministry of worship, preaching and teaching; to provide pastoral care and help the congregation care for each other; and to do required administration. The successful candidate will have minimum M.Div., preferably 10 plus years of pastoral experience, the ability to work with a collegial ministry team and strong lay leadership. S/he will have strong preaching skills, effective communication skills and be comfortable working in a community of considerable diversity while maintaining a strong commitment to the Mennonite Church.

For additional information please visit our website at **www.tumc.ca.** Please direct applications and inquiries to Muriel Bechtel, MCEC Conference Minister, at muriel@mcec.ca, or 519-650-3806 or 1-800-206-9356.

ENTER

Got photos?

The Mennonite's first photo contest!

$50 will be awarded to the first-place winners in each of **five categories.**

Deadline: Feb. 1, 2009

See **www.themennonite.org** for more details.

Young adults set own agenda at retreat

'Quarterlife crisis,' inclusiveness and disagreeing in the church main topics

Anna Groff

From left: Laura Epp of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Shanda Hochstetler of Portland, Ore.; and Amanda Gross of Atlanta, at the binational young adult retreat in Keezletown, Va.

Young adults at the North American Young Adult Fellowship (YAF) retreat Oct. 30-Nov. 2 in Keezletown, Va., named their top concerns: inclusiveness in the church, disagreeing well and "quarterlife crisis"—a term applied to young adults. "Using our resources" was a close fourth.

Instead of using a keynote speaker, participants named these concerns through a process called "open space technology" in which self-appointed conveners hold sessions and list recommendations. The group narrowed the list of topics to three, named actions, then the convener decided the next step. All three convenors decided to move toward some actions while continuing to discern. Area conference leaders and churchwide agencies will receive reports from the retreat.

Amanda Gross, convener for "inclusiveness," said she intended the term to mean welcoming new religions, ethnicities and sexual orientations into Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada congregations. "I really like that we got to set our own agenda," she said.

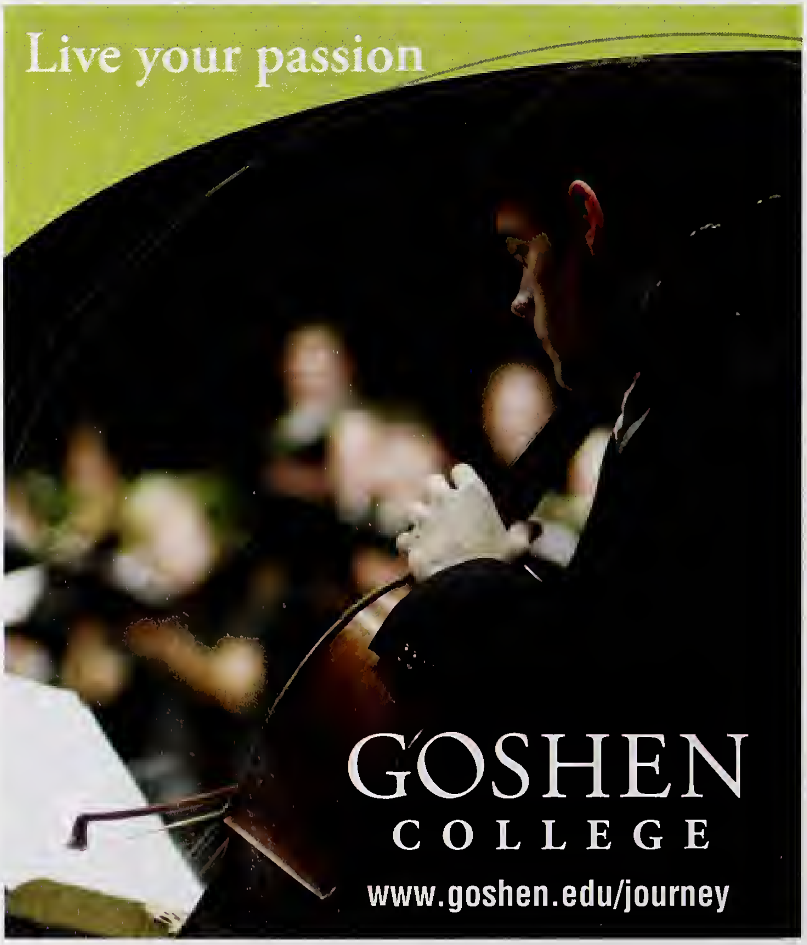
Anya Williamson, convener for "quarter-life crisis," said the process "helped narrow down what the community thinks is important."

Peter Epp, YAF committee member, told the group on Nov. 2, "This is the first time it felt like [the people in] this room [are] YAF."

Epp said YAF hopes for a representative from each area conference. About seven of the 25 attended in that capacity.

YAF is the young adult arm of Mennonite Church USA and MC Canada with staff Dave Bergen, executive secretary of Christian formation for MC Canada, and Scott Hartman, convention planning for Mennonite Church USA.—*Anna Groff*

"Quarterlife crisis" refers to a period of anxiety that can accompany the transition to adulthood. The phrase was coined by Abby Wilner, co-author of *Quarterlife Crisis* and *Quarterlifer's Companion.*


Live your passion

GOSHEN
COLLEGE
www.goshen.edu/journey

timely tip:
Practice bicycle safety!

Goodville
Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business. Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

Task force formed for *The Mennonite*

Cost-cutting measures include switch to different paper, 23 issues next year.

The board of directors for The Mennonite, Inc., wrestled with changing readership patterns of Mennonite Church USA members, accepted a Sept. 30 financial report showing a record level of contributions from readers and responded to an initiative by the Executive Board to create a task force to consider a plan that would move *The Mennonite* into the Executive Board's new communication and development department. The TM board met in Dallas Oct. 24-25 so members could attend the new congregation established by board member Esther Vasquez and her husband, José.

The board learned that declining circulation for *The Mennonite* is being offset by increasing circulation for several new Internet periodicals. *TMail*, a free weekly ezine launched one year ago, now has more than 1,000 subscribers and began generating advertising revenue in September. The magazine's new Web site, launched in June 2007, is setting records for page views each month and began generating advertising revenue in October. The Web site set a record with 10,109 total visits in the month of October. *Meno Acontecer*, a Spanish-language ezine published once each month in collaboration with Mennonite Education Agency, has 301 subscribers after six months.

The Internet projects are the result of the TM board's decision two years ago to invest in the "digital" side of news reporting. But *The Mennonite* magazine—which generated the funds to develop the ezines and Web site redesign—continues to decline in circulation, with slightly more than 10,000 subscribers in November. Circulation manager Rebecca Helmuth reported that the primary reason former subscribers give for not renewing their subscription is the cost.

In response to this trend, the board recommended several actions to cut expenses: switching to a less expensive paper beginning in January 2009 and reducing the number of issues distributed each year. Beginning in 2009, there will be only one issue in July and one in August—the months when advertising is low and many subscribers are on vacation. However, in years when there is a biennial convention, a second issue will be published in July that covers the convention.

The TM board also responded to an Executive Board proposal to locate *The Mennonite* within the Executive Board's new communication and development department. A proposal to form a task force to negotiate such a change emerged from the review of *The Mennonite* at the Sept. 19 meeting of the Executive Board. In response to the Executive Board proposal, the TM board adopted a statement that says, "The work of the task force should be to describe an editorial policy, the nature of a possible editorial board and how the governance of *The Mennonite* will operate under the responsibility of the Executive Board, in line with the mission and purposes of *The Mennonite* as described in the Mennonite Church USA bylaws."

In other matters, the board agreed to publish three more issues of *OurFaith Digest* in 2009 and budgeted for a magazine circulation consultant to meet with board and staff members at the March 2009 board meeting.—*Everett J. Thomas*

Paraguay 2009
Mennonite World Conference
Assembly Gathered
Asunción, Paraguay
14-19 July 2009
Assembly Scattered across Latin America and the Caribbean before and after Assembly Gathered
REGISTER NOW!
www.mwc-cmm.org
God is calling us to Paraguay... ¡Vamos!
"Come together in the way of Jesus Christ."
—Philippians 2:1-11

We came for the Values, and the Value.
MENNO HAVEN
Relationships. Values. Options.
MENNO VILLAGE • NORTHFIELD • PENN HALL
800.222.6695 www.mennohaven.org
Menno Haven is committed to providing equal housing for all.

Argentine Mennonites expand missions

Tour after Paraguay 2009 will offer firsthand view of church planting.

Ryan Miller

Edgardo Sánchez, Matias Quesada and others at worship in the Mennonite church in Neuquen, Argentina.

Mennonite Mission Network offers an opportunity to learn from Mennonites in Argentina who live and breathe mission.

From July 20 to 26, 2009, after Mennonite World Conference Assembly Gathered in Paraguay, Mauricio Chenlo and Edgardo Sánchez will lead a tour focusing on church planting and mission.

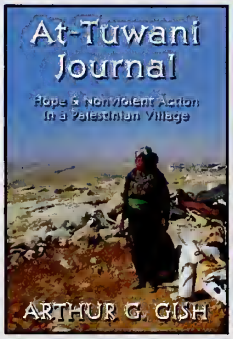
Chenlo, an Argentine and former mission worker in Ecuador, serves as a consultant and director of the Hispanic Church Planting Academy with Mennonite Mission Network. Sánchez is a leader of Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina (Argentine Mennonite Church).

Chenlo encourages those who are interested in revitalizing their own congregations, as well as church planters, to join the tour and witness firsthand what God is doing in urban centers and remote Andean villages. He extends a special invitation to Hispanic church leaders and youth.

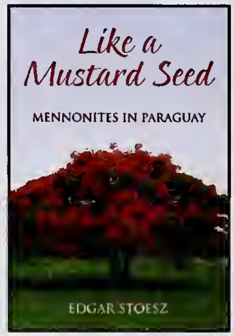
Chenlo hopes North American young people will be challenged by the vibrant energy that their Argentine peers bring to church life.

The tour will visit the capital city, Buenos Aires, before venturing into the Patagonia region and beautiful locations, such as Neuquén, Bariloche, Villa La Angostura and Esquel. Accommodations will include a retreat center in Buenos Aires, Mennonite host families in the Neuquén area and affordable cabins or hotels. For more information contact ArloaB@MennoniteMission.net or MauricioC@MennoniteMission.net.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of Mennonite Mission Network*

Herald Press: Resources for Living the Faith



At-Tuwani Journal
Hope & Nonviolent Action in a Palestinian Village
Art Gish offers an inside view of the work of Christian Peacemaker Teams in the Palestinian town of At-Tuwani. Through vivid stories told in journal fashion, Gish offers a candid but sympathetic portrait of traditional Palestinians in the shadow of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank.
Paper, 366 pages, $17.99



Like a Mustard Seed: Mennonites in Paraguay
Edgar Stoesz tells the inspiring story of the Russian, Canadian, and Mexican Mennonites who, beginning in 1927, emigrated to Paraguay and made a new homeland out of the jungle wilderness. In the succeeding decades, Mennonite communities in Paraguay have established schools, clinics, hospitals, churches, and farms. This is a fascinating story that deserves a prominent place in the annuals of Mennonite history. Coming in November.
Paper, 280 pages, $24.99

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

A call to prayer:

Following Jesus in a world that is not

Un llamado a la oración:

Seguir a Jesús en un mundo que no lo sigue

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)

Fellow members of Mennonite Church USA congregations, in the name of Jesus, I give you greetings and extend to you a call to prayer.

Delegates gathered at San José 2007 passed an important resolution about our national identity as Mennonite Christians in the United States. Delegates asked the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board to help the church explore our identity as followers of Jesus living in this country. A task force has helped give shape to a process that can involve congregations.

We are greatly blessed to live in the United States. And yet we are also confronted with the challenge to be faithful in following Jesus in a world that is not. In the shifting culture around us, we are forgetting whose we are.

We are collaborating with *The Mennonite* to produce a special issue next February that will be designed for congregational study. Your responses will be part of delegate discussion, learning, confession and prayer at the delegate assembly in Columbus next summer. A young adult drama team will be available to work with conferences and congregations for the months after the assembly.

We ask for your prayers that these resources are developed and used to help all of us think more carefully about who we are and what God wants us to become. Look for more information soon.

Y a Aquel que es poderoso para hacer todas las cosas mucho más abundantemente de lo que pedimos o entendemos, según el poder que actúa en nosotros. (Efesios 3:20)

Hermanos miembros de las congregaciones de la Iglesia Menonita USA, en nombre de Jesús los saludo y les envío este llamado a la oración.

Los delegados en San José 2007 aprobaron una importante resolución sobre nuestra identidad nacional como cristianos menonitas en Estados Unidos. Ellos le pidieron a la junta directiva de la Iglesia Menonita USA que ayudaran a la iglesia a explorar nuestra identidad como seguidores de Jesús en este país. Un grupo de trabajo ha ayudado a darle forma a un proceso que puede incluir a las congregaciones.

Es una gran bendición para nosotros vivir en Estados Unidos. A la vez, se nos presenta el desafío de seguir fielmente a Jesús en un mundo que no lo sigue. En la cambiante cultura que nos rodea, olvidamos a quién pertenecemos.

Estamos colaborando con *The Mennonite (El Menonita)* en la producción una edición especial en febrero que será diseñada para el estudio en la congregación. Sus respuestas formarán parte de la discusión, aprendizaje, confesión y oraciones de los delegados durante la asamblea de los mismos en Columbus el verano próximo. Un grupo de teatro de jóvenes adultos se ofrecerá para trabajar con las conferencias y congregaciones en los meses posteriores a la convención.

Les pedimos que oren para que estos recursos se desarrollen y se utilicen con el fin de ayudarnos a todos a pensar más detenidamente quiénes somos y qué quiere Dios de nosotros. Estén pendientes de la información que pronto circularemos.

With abundant hope – con abundante esperanza,

Terry Shue

Terry Shue, Pastor, Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church

(member of Executive Board and national identity task group)
(miembro de la Junta Directiva y el grupo de trabajo por la identidad nacional)

Mennonite Church USA **Iglesia Menonita EUA**

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

•Editor@TheMennonite.org

•fax 574-535-6050

•1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

CALENDAR

On Nov. 10, 7 p.m., ***Ernst Bergen, former Minister of Finance for the government of Paraguay, will speak and sign books*** at **Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church**, 3320 Bowman Road, through an event sponsored by the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. Event is free and open to the public; all are welcome. More information available from the Society at 717-393-9745.

On Nov. 20, 4:30 p.m., **Elizabethtown (Pa.) College** will welcome community members to the next event in its signature series, the ***Ware Seminars on Global Citizenship***. The upcoming seminar will feature a panel discussion, titled "God and the State: Religion, Citizenship and the Public Square." More information is available by calling the College's Office of Marketing and Communication at 717-361-1410.

Damascus Road Antiracism Analysis Training, Feb. 27-March 1, 2009, **Philadelphia, Pa.** Details and registration at www.slf.franconiaconference.org; click on Damascus Road link. Or contact Sharon Williams, 610-277-1279; sharonw@designforministry.com

WORKERS

Anderson, Marshall, was ordained on Oct. 25 as associate pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Brubaker, Shirley Yoder, ended a term as interim pastor at Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., on Oct. 31.

DeLeon, Nestalis, was ordained as lead pastor at Mennonite Evangelical Tabernacle, Brooklyn, N.Y., on Sept. 20.

Emery, Peter, was licensed for specific ministry on Oct. 23 as interim pastor at Turpin Mennonite Church, Turpin, Okla.

Erb, Leroy H., ended a term as associate pastor at Derry Mennonite Church, Danville, Pa., on Aug. 10.

Gehman, Paul H., was installed as chaplain at Fairmont Homes, Farmersville, Pa., on Sept. 21.

Haupert, Stephen A., resigned from his oversight and pastoral roles in the North Penn District on Oct. 5

Miller, Keith D., ended a term as lead pastor at Derry Mennonite Church, Danville, Pa., on Aug. 10.

Miller, Ross, began a term as senior pastor at Hartville Mennonite Church, Hartville, Ohio, on Nov. 3.

Neis, Thomas A. Jr., elder at Locust Lane Chapel, Harrisburg, Pa., transferred his credential on Oct. 8.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Baker, Judah Trace, Oct. 24, to Aaron and Christy Baker, Charlottesville, Va.

Christian, Micah Allan, Aug. 12, to Matthew and Anita Mast Christian, Americus, Ga.

Fast, John Micah, Aug. 2, to J. David and Melissa Fisher Fast, Elkhart, Ind.

Franz, Elinor Grace, Oct. 6, to David and Charis Franz, Charlottesville, Va.

Hartsock, Braden Joseph, Oct. 3, to Bill and Jill Miller Hartsock, Kalona, Iowa.

Litwiller, Charles Andrew, Oct. 14, to Chad and Tanya Schmidgall Litwiller, Peoria, Ill.

Martin, Ava Reedy, Oct. 5, to Andrew Martin and Jill Reedy, Washington, D.C.

Murray, Leo Russel, Oct. 18, to Jodi and Chris Murray, Columbus, Ohio.

Risser, Grace Annabel, Oct. 28, to Daniel and Danette Cara Salmon Risser, Harrisonburg, Va.

Sines, Katlyn Jo, Oct. 15, to Riley and Carrie Miller Sines, Salisbury, Pa.

Snyder, Kailey Elizabeth, Oct. 23, to John and Lisa Tanner Snyder, Wauseon, Ohio.

MARRIAGES

Charles/Leichty: Twila Jean Charles, Williamsport, Pa., and Paul D. Leichty, Goshen, Ind., July 26, at Agape Fellowship of the Mennonite Church, Williamsport.

Dick/Yoder: Daniel Dick, Goshen, Ind., and Richelle Yoder, Middlebury, Ind., Sept. 27, at the home of the bride's parents in Middlebury.

Enns/Klassen: Joel Enns, Winkler, Manitoba, and Becky Klassen, Altona, Manitoba, Sept. 6, at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Gattis/Hein: James Gattis, Newton, Kan., and Carmen Hein, Hillsboro, Kan., Oct. 4, at Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Giammarco/Troyer: Tim Giammarco and Alison Troyer, Uniontown, Ohio, Oct. 25, at Hartville Mennonite Church, Hartville, Ohio.

Haubert/Walther: Allison Haubert, Canton, Ohio, and Dean Walther II, Columbus, Ohio, Oct. 18, at Hartville Mennonite Church, Hartville, Ohio.

Hett/Schmidt: Eileen Hett, Marion, Kan., and Troy Schmidt, Marion, Oct. 18, at Aulne Methodist, Marion.

Kauffman/Petrosky: JoyLynn Kauffman, Kalispell, Mont., and Jason Petrosky, Conrad, Mont., Sept. 27, in Kalispell, Mont.

Good work...*advanced.*

Western Mennonite School (Salem, OR) contracted with AAI for enrollment counsel.

ADVANCEMENT
Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Consulting In
Strategic Visioning
Fundraising
Capital Campaigns
Enrollment

Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

Klotz/Rheinheimer: Michael Klotz, Wakarusa, Ind., and Cristina Rheinheimer, Middlebury, Ind., Oct. 4, at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Shaw/Witmer: Chelsea Shaw, Elkhart, Ind., and Kyle Witmer, Goshen, Ind., Sept. 27, at Northside Baptist Church, Elkhart.

DEATHS

Clemens, Marcus Alderfer, 92, Lansdale, Pa., died Oct. 2. Spouse: Phyllis Clemens. Spouse: Helen Schueck Gotwals Clemens (deceased). Parents: Garrett A. and Elizabeth A. Alderfer Clemens. Children: Donald, Orrie, Leanne Wentorf, Jane Landes, Carolyn Bontrager, Richard; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 5 at Plains Mennonite Church, Lansdale.

Ewy, Christine Helen Ortman, 88, Jetmore, Kan., died Oct. 21. Spouse: Weldon L. Ewy. Parents: Fredrick and Christina Brubacher Ortman. Children: Douglas, Barbara Gibbs; two grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Hanston Mennonite Church, Hanston, Kan.

Gingrich, Adella Iva Stutzman, 94, Albany, Ore., died Sept. 7 of heart failure. Spouse: Allen William Gingrich (deceased). Parents: Roy and Caroline Isabel Birky Stutzman. Children: Jessie Caroline Hostetler, Gale Allen, Byron Dean, Roy Marshall; eight grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 11 at Albany Mennonite Church.

Lehman, Daniel Ernest, 76, West Liberty, Ohio, died Oct. 18. Spouse: Shirley Yoder Lehman. Parents: Daniel E. and Ruth Baumgartner Lehman. Children: David; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 24 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Martin, Elsie, 88, Lititz, Pa., died Sept. 5. Parents: Enos and Anna Gehman Martin. Memorial service: Sept. 20 at West Bethany Chapel, Landis Homes, Lititz.

Milne, Freda Mae King, 85, Glendale, Ariz., died Aug. 30 of a stroke. Spouse: Robert William Milne (deceased). Parents: Edward M. and Elizabeth Augsburger King. Children: Ronald, Beverly Hershberger; 10 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 22 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

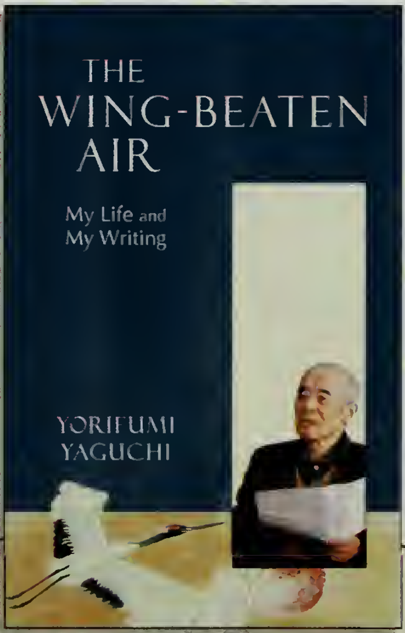
Nickel, Ivan Wayne, 79, Hillsboro, Kan., died Oct. 15 following an extended illness. Parents: Henry and Kathryn Willms Nickel. Funeral: Oct, 18 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Oswald, Leland, 86, Harrisonburg, Va., died Oct. 13 of cancer. Spouse: Doretta Miller Oswald. Parents: Christian and Elizabeth Birky Oswald. Children: Joan Kulp, Jane Yoder, Donald, six grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 17 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Showalter, Edith Marie Burkholder, 89, Broadway, Va., died Oct. 27. Spouse: John S. Showalter (deceased). Parents: Emanuel J. and Ella Weaver Burkholder. Children: Karin Halterman; one grandchild; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 30 at Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway.

Stucky, Victor "Vic" Dale, 83, Galva, Kan., died Sept. 30 of pancreatitis. Spouse: Millie Schrag Stucky. Parents: Silvanus and Anna Schrag Stucky. Children: Barbara Shipp, Bernie Oliver; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 3 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.

"For the Record" lists obituaries for Mennonite Church USA members who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at www.TheMennonite.org. . To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6052. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email Editor@themennonite.org.



"A LOVELY Personal Book to Ponder."

—Rudy Wiebe

Acclaimed Japanese poet Yorifumi Yaguchi has turned his attention to telling what he experienced growing up in Japan in the late 1930s and '40s.

Recognized in Japan as a major poet and also as an outspoken advocate for peace, Yaguchi, a longtime Mennonite pastor, here uses his extraordinary voice to tell his life story.

5½ x 8½ • 224 pages • $11.95, paperback
Group discounts available.

Good Books

At local bookstores or directly from the publisher • Group discounts available from the publisher.
Call: 1-800-762-7171, ext. 221 • P.O. Box 419, Intercourse, PA 17534 • www.GoodBooks.com
Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and AmEx accepted. Shipping/Handling, add 10% ($3.00 minimum).

Mennonite Central Committee is seeking qualified applicants for a ***graphic design position***. A B.A. or equivalent work experience in graphic design is required. This position also requires 1-3 years of experience in electronic prepress production and proficiency in using the Internet, email, Mac computer, InDesign and/or Quark Xpress with grids and style sheets, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Flash, Web design and the willingness to learn Dreamweaver. The ability to juggle multiple tasks, meet deadlines and understand and articulate the agency-wide visual identity for MCC is required. Magazine design experience is a plus. Please review full job description at www.mcc.org/serve before applying. Send resumé and letter of interest to Prem Dick at: psd@mcc.org or MCC Human Resources, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501 or call 717-859-1151.

For sale: 1998 mobile home. 16x60 two bedroom/two bath. Original owner, handicapped accessible, furnished with appliances and motorized scooter. Located at #93 Peoria Mobile Estates, 6942 W. Olive, **Peoria, Ariz.** Less than one mile from Glencroft. 815-646-4889 or pkman@udnet.net.

Goshen College announces six ***full-time, tenure-track faculty positions*** in the departments of ***Art, Biology, Education, English, Physics and Psychology*** beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year. Application reviews will begin Dec. 1, 2008, and continue until the positions are filled. Please visit our Web site at www.goshen.edu/employment for more information about each position's responsibilities and requirements as well as to submit an application. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with Mennonite Church USA.

Manheim Christian Day School, (PreK-8th grade) Lancaster, Pa., is seeking ***administrator***, July 2009. Application available on Web site: www.manheimchristian.org; email: jnoltmcds@dejazzd.com; Attn: Julia Nolt.

Can't find a Mennonite spiritual director near your home? For many years I couldn't either. But now, wherever you live in the United States, you can meet me for spiritual direction using a webcam and high-speed Internet connection. I've been a Mennonite pastor and church leader for 26 years, a spiritual director for 12, and have a doctorate in Christian spirituality. Your first session is free, and if you need to buy a webcam or headset, your second session is also free. For subsequent sessions I suggest $50-$80, depending on your means. Visit www.danschrock.org or write me at dan@danschrock.org.

Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church, Harper, Kan., seeks ***full-time pastor*** beginning January 2009. Established mature membership excited about recent growth in youth programs. Welcome applications from academically qualified people who respect the Anabaptist/Mennonite peace church tradition and endorse youth outreach, while balancing mature membership counseling and visitation. When applying, please include full resumé of qualifications and experience. Compensation package follows Mennonite Church USA guidelines. Mail resumés, in confidence, to Heber Ramer, Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church, 1020 E. 14th, Harper, KS 67058, or contact Heber by phone: 620-835-1042 day or 620-896-2792 evenings or email: chramer@sbcglobal.net.

Can you provide energizing, inspirational leadership to a congregation of approximately 150 that is beginning to revitalize itself through a Spirit-led transformation process? Are you a team-player and a gifted communicator, able to relate to all generations and preach in both traditional and contemporary worship styles with an emphasis on Anabaptism? If you feel called to this ***full-time lead pastor*** position at **Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church**, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, please read our "letter of introduction to our new lead pastor" on our Web site at www.wkumchurch.com. Enquiries and applications can be directed to: Muriel Bechtel, MCEC Conference Minister, 4489 King St. East, Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2.

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"**I work to position my teaching on the line between church and culture so that my students understand the resources of the church and are able to use these resources to engage the world.** I hope my students can recognize in me, and in my teaching, something that is both faithful and intelligible and able to serve the various cultures that they inhabit."

– Trevor Bechtel, assistant professor of religion

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

Group savings

By subscribing ***today*** with other members of your congregation or community you can enjoy *The Mennonite*'s inspiring commentary, news, editorials and articles at a group discount. Receive bimonthly issues packed full of material that will challenge and inspire you. *The Mennonite* provides a forum for voices within Mennonite Church USA, encourages the ministries of our denomination and helps members build loyalty to our church.

To subscribe as a group, log onto our Web site at **www.TheMennonite.org** or call Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498.**

The Mennonite

Hesston College seeks applicants for a ***faculty position in business.*** Master's degree required; MBA or doctorate and teaching experience preferred. Qualifications: evidence of excellence in teaching including incorporation of appropriate technology, innovative spirit, love for students, ability to build relationships with alumni and community business leaders, experience in business, record of successful leadership, ability to do research in the scholarship of teaching, ability to do market research in business, understanding of higher education, potential to lead a family-operated business initiative and/or the business department, commitment to Mennonite higher education and Mennonite Church USA. Position available Aug. 15, 2009. Review of applications begins Jan. 15, 2009, and continues until position is filled. To apply, visit www.hesston.edu/employment. EOE.

Albany Mennonite Church in Albany, Ore., seeks a ***pastor or co-pastor team.*** Our 145-member congregation desires leadership committed to Anabaptist theology and congregational life. We're an active congregation in a newly expanded facility. For more information contact Donna Miller at 541-926-3025 or ddmiller2@comcast.net.

***Promotional/marketing writer*: Mennonite Mission Network** seeks an innovative, experienced promotional writer to create fund-raising and advertising pieces. This full-time marketing and communication associate will also assist with constituency surveys and market research as well as write articles for various Mennonite Mission Network publications and assist in creating marketing plans for Mission Network departments. The ideal candidate will be a committed Christian, participate in a congregation and be a collaborative team player. Must be willing to embrace diversity as well as develop and implement antiracism guidelines for the department. Marketing/communication degree with writing experience/marketing emphasis preferred. Proven writing and editing skills; understanding of fund-raising theory and strategies. For more information, see Staff Opportunities at www.MennoniteMission.net or call Linda Krueger at 574-523-3009. Mennonite Mission Network is an antiracist organization.

Mount Joy Mennonite Church seeks ***full-time equivalent associate pastor(s)*** for Christian formation and nurture: youth (.5), children (.25) and adult education (.25). Ministry responsibilities can be fulfilled by one to three people. There is flexibility in how the positions are configured, offering options for part-time or full-time, if combining several areas of giftedness. When applying, please note the area(s) of responsibility of interest to you and your availability for full-time and/or part-time. Mail resumés, in confidence, to Mary Fretz, 123 David St., Mount Joy, PA 17522, or contact Brad Wagner by telephone: 717-665-3529 or email: bradnat@dejazzd.com.

Canadian Mennonite is seeking an ***editor/publisher*** for its bi-weekly periodical, based in Waterloo, Ont. *Canadian Mennonite* serves as a primary communication vehicle within Mennonite Church Canada and its five area conferences. Owned and operated by Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service, *Canadian Mennonite* works in a covenant relationship of trust with the church, seeking to provide fair and accurate information, faith profiles, inspirational articles, news and analysis of issues facing the Mennonite church. *Canadian Mennonite* is guided by the church's confession of faith and a representative board. The editor/publisher is accountable to the board, guides and directs the magazine, provides a vision and strategy for growth and generally has responsibility for the publication. Applicants should have membership in a Mennonite church, communication and listening skills, denominational knowledge, administrative and personnel skills, knowledge of publishing, a journalism degree or related experience, computer competence and be self-motivated. Please direct inquiries and submit resumés by contacting the search committee via: Henry Neufeld; phone: 604-946-3961; hneufeld@telus.net

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.30 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Rebecca Helmuth, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

Books on the church, Jesus and spirituality

Gordon Houser

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

As books pile up in the bookstores, on our shelves and on our wish lists, you may want to consider these recent releases.

The church: Phyllis Tickle's *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why* (BakerBooks, 2008, $17.99) argues that massive transitions in the church happen every 500 years or so and that we're in one now. As helpful as her thesis is her overview of church history and her engaging writing.

As Tickle shows how church history has led to an emerging church, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove's *New Monasticism: What It Has to Say to Today's Church* (Brazos Press, 2008, $14.99) looks at the history of monasticism and applies some of its lessons to today, when "it's hard to be a Christian in America." A spokesman for this new movement, Hartgrove describes his book as "what it means to be Christian citizens of the world's last remaining superpower at the beginning of the third millennium." Stories from his own experience and that of other communities enhance the book's points.

Robert E. Webber completed *Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative* (BakerBooks, 2008, $14.99), the final volume in his Ancient-Future series, shortly before he died. The series seeks to learn from the practices of the ancient church and apply these to the contemporary church, living in memory and hope. Webber argues that worship must perform God's story by remembering the past and anticipating the future. He applies God's story to worship in terms of Word, Eucharist and prayer. He writes: "[The] divorce of worship and spirituality from the story of God's creation, incarnation and re-creation has resulted in a new kind of Gnostic worship and spirituality," something early Christians adamantly opposed. Webber provides much to chew on.

Jesus: Sebastian Moore calls his book *The Contagion of Jesus: Doing Theology As If It Mattered* (Orbis Books, 2008, $20) "passionate rather than rigorous theology," which also means it's more accessible than academic. A collection of excerpts from various essays on such subjects as the Trinity, Jesus our scapegoat, resurrection and the Eucharist, Mary and the feminine, friendship and discipleship, it is full of wise nuggets, such as, "being unforgiving and taking myself too seriously are one and the same thing."

Jesus the Village Psychiatrist by Donald Capps (Westminster John Knox Press, 2008, $19.95) may sound like a strange title, but Capps combines biblical scholarship and modern psychiatric thought to argue that the people Jesus healed "were largely suffering from psychosomatic illnesses, that Jesus recognized this fact and ... used healing methods that took this fact into account." He notes that Jesus worked mainly in the village setting and asks what kinds of mental disorders were most likely to develop in that time and place and how Jesus healed them. Capps' study not only helps us understand Jesus in his time but has implications for pastoral care today.

Spirituality: *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality* by Evan B. Howard (Brazos Press, 2008, $39.99) is an excellent resource for anyone wanting to understand the topic practically, psychologically and historically. Howard defines Christian spirituality in three facets: "a relationship with God as lived in practice, as dynamics are formulated, as explored through formal study." The book is long but accessible, with illustrations, focus questions, chapter summaries and resources for further exploration.

Ancient Christian Devotional: A Year of Weekly Readings, edited by Cindy Crosby (IVP Books, 2007, $17), is a guide to prayer and reflection that combines excerpts from the writings of the church fathers as found in the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* with a simple structure for daily or weekly reading and prayer. The 52 weeks of readings follow the church year and include many wise sayings that will enrich your spiritual life. TM

FILMS

In the crass and humorous documentary **Religulous** (R), comedian Bill Maher interviews people representing religions that include Christianity, Islam, Mormonism and more. The valuable interviews are ones in which Maher critically questions mainstream Christian leaders for their lifestyles that do not reflect Christ's teachings and their Christian nationalism. However, his interviews with Muslim leaders are uncomfortable and prevent any genuine dialogue. Maher initially advocates for approaching faith with humble doubt, but he slips into cheap, heavy-handing "religion bashing" in the final 10 minutes of the film.—*Anna Groff*

The Secret Life of Bees (PG-13) is based on Sue Monk Kidd's popular novel about a 14-year-old girl in South Carolina in 1964 who flees her abusive father and ends up with the Boatwright sisters, who teach her about beekeeping, a Black Madonna and love. She must come to terms with the loss of her mother when she was 4. Well-acted, the movie tends toward the sentimental and changes a scene from the book to make it even more of a feel-good story.—*gh*

BOOKS

The Shack: A Novel by William P. Young (Windblown Media, 2007, $14.99) profits from a stunning story line and suffers from too much preaching, though the book's conclusion is inspiring. The plot centers around "the great sadness" that has settled into the heart of Mack, a father whose little girl was abducted and murdered by a serial killer. Visiting a shack in the woods, Mack spends a weekend with some mischievous anthropomorphisms of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Wisdom. Through Mack's arguments and meals with them, he finds some important answers and a mature joy for his shattered life.—*Everett J. Thomas*

1400 Best Slow Cooker Recipes!

Fix-It and Forget-It
BIG COOKBOOK
1400 Best Slow Cooker Recipes!

by Phyllis Pellman Good

Finally, all in one handsome volume, the best 1400 slow cooker recipes!

New York Times bestselling author Phyllis Pellman Good has gathered **the biggest collection of tantalizing, best-ever slow cooker recipes into one great book.**

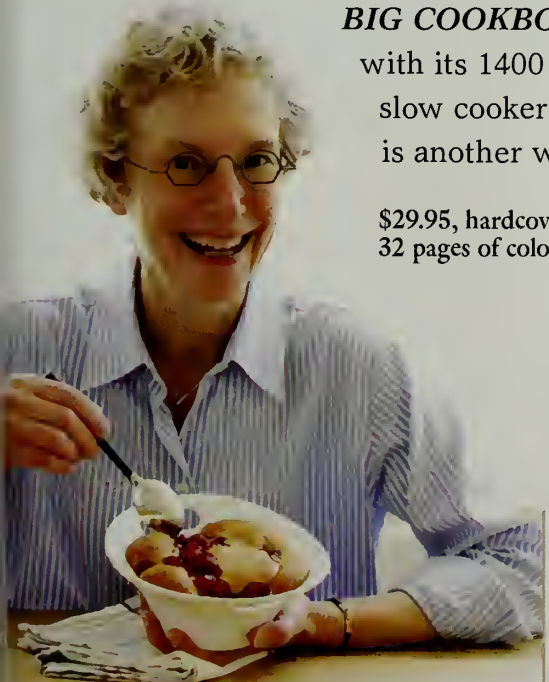
Eight small "galleries" of full-color photos of delectable slow cooker dishes from the collection add sparkle throughout the cookbook.

Phyllis Pellman Good's cookbooks have sold nearly 10 million copies. Her five beloved *Fix-It and Forget-It* cookbooks have themselves sold more than 8 million copies!

Fix-It and Forget-It BIG COOKBOOK, with its 1400 best slow cooker recipes, is another winner!

$29.95, hardcover with dust-jacket
32 pages of color photos

By The New York Times bestselling author
FIX-IT and FORGET-IT®
BIG COOKBOOK
1400 Best Slow Cooker Recipes!
Phyllis Pellman Good
FIX-IT and FORGET-IT
BIG COOKBOOK
Phyllis Pellman Good
Good Books



New York Times *bestselling author*
Phyllis Pellman Good

The biggest collection of tantalizing, quick-and-easy, 1400 best-ever slow cooker recipes in one great book!

Good Books

At local bookstores or directly from the publisher • Call: 1-800-762-7171, ext. 221
P.O. Box 419, Intercourse, PA 17534 • www.GoodBooks.com • Mastercard, Visa,
Discover, and AmEx accepted. Shipping/Handling, add 10% ($3.00 minimum).

*******************************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 894 15-DEC-09 66994 P-1 P79
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Change is coming to *The Mennonite*

Everett J. Thomas

Change is coming to post-election America this Thanksgiving season. Change is also coming to *The Mennonite*. Some of the changes were initiated by us. Some were initiated by others and some by the current economic environment.

The gathering economic recession is one reason for some changes, and it is taking a toll on our bottom line. In August, a major advertiser informed us that it needed to reduce the amount of advertising planned for 2008. That was a $9,000 hit at a time when postage and printing costs increased. But the clearest evidence of growing economic stress is among our subscribers. Last June through our annual readers' survey, we asked (as usual) for an evaluation of our pricing. At that time, only 7 percent of respondents said they were unsatisfied with our subscription prices. Now, when our circulation manager calls those not renewing their subscriptions, the most common reason has to do with affordability.

This has led to another decline in our circulation. But it would not be prudent to raise prices to compensate for lost subscription dollars. So we are taking two difficult steps to reduce expenses: Beginning in January, we will print the magazine on a less-expensive—and "greener"—paper. Beginning in 2009, we will also reduce the number of issues each year. Our new frequency will mean only one issue in July and one issue in August—except for a year when there is a Mennonite Church USA convention, when we will publish a second issue in July. That means 23 issues in 2009 and 22 issues in 2010.

We regret this loss in value to our subscribers and wish to offer something in return. That "something" is a new offer: Any subscriber whose account is paid in full may now receive a pdf of each issue by email on the issue's date (see box).

We also understand that circulation decline is part of the entire print medium these days, and we must expand into Internet publishing. Our board of directors anticipated these trajectories several years ago. Consequently, we invested heavily in a redesigned Web site and several free periodicals called "ezines." Both the Web site and the ezine called *TMail* are now beginning to earn advertising revenue (see page 23). Since the number of people who subscribe to *TMail* determines the rate we can charge advertisers, we encourage you to sign up for this free service. Send your request to AnnaG@themennonite.org, and you will receive this free electronic magazine every Monday.

Other behind-the-scenes activity is also bringing changes to *The Mennonite*. Some you may already have seen; others are on the way.

During the Executive Board's review process of *The Mennonite* in September, we responded to several specific requests. One was for MC USA executive director Jim Schrag to have a regular column. That has now appeared in the first issue of October and of November. The EB also asked that editorials related to any EB matter be tested with the executive director. We have begun doing that as well. Other changes—such as the EB's request to redesign the magazine so it carries MC USA visual design standards—are long-term changes that will require research and planning.

The most significant change for *The Mennonite* may still be ahead. In June, the Executive Board released its proposal to restructure Mennonite Church USA; that proposal called for *The Mennonite* to become part of the Executive Board's new department of communication and development. A joint task force is being formed to consider the ramifications of such a change.

But one change has been astonishing: This year we have been bouyed by an outpouring of financial contributions from our readers. By the end of October we received $67,611, nearly double the amount we normally receive each year. So this Thanksgiving season we are thankful for changes, even as we wait to understand them all.—*ejt*

This Thanksgiving season we are thankful for changes, even as we wait to understand them all.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

Now available: a pdf version of each issue emailed to you by the issue date.

Requires a paid subscription to *The Mennonite*
Send your request to
subscriptions@themennonite.org.

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Mennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

December 2, 2008

welcome all abilities

Page 8

12 Christ-centered thinking

14 True harmony

18 U.S. and Canadian Mennos need each other

32 Who's having a quarterlife crisis?

Where is God taking us?

James Schrag is executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

There is a story about Albert Einstein on a train. The conductor asked to see his ticket. Searching his pockets, Einstein could not find his ticket. But the conductor recognized the famous scientist and reassured him, "Dr. Einstein, don't worry about it. We know who you are. I'm sure you bought a ticket." A few minutes later the conductor spied the learned doctor on his knees peering under his seat, obviously looking for his ticket. He returned and repeated, "Dr. Einstein, don't worry about the ticket, we know who you are." Einstein peered up at the conductor and replied, "Sir, I also know who I am; my problem is I don't know where I'm going."

As Christians we seldom ask who we are. Our identity is not in question. But our direction is more perplexing. Where is God taking us? Further, does going where God is going make us trend followers or trend setters?

Recently many Sunday school classes across Mennonite Church USA have been discussing Conrad Kanagy's study of our churchwide membership profile, *Road Signs for the Journey*. The title signals that we are going somewhere. The book studies trends. Our average age, 54, is five years higher than in 1989. Our birth rate is lower than the general population, mostly because our educational level is higher, we have more people in professional vocations and we are wealthier than average Americans. One-third of us lived on farms in 1972, compared with 12 percent today. Many of our trends point toward decline.

Remarkably, our families and marriages remain stable, only 10 percent of us having experienced divorce. Though we report a slight increase in openness to premarital sex than in 1972, we are more opposed to extramarital sex than 35 years ago. We remain orthodox in our beliefs about Jesus and the Trinity. We read the Bible and pray at about the same rates and are more accepting of other Christians than we used to be.

Jesus says we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. But he warns of losing our saltiness, hiding our light. We are both trend setters and trend followers. We reflect the general decline of church life and participation, and we set examples of sound family life, consistent Christian belief and spiritual discipline. We remain a mixed bag of imperfect human foibles and a surprising, amazing testimony to the work of God in and through us.

Where is God taking Mennonite Church USA members? Is God pushing us forward by our laudable past, or is Jesus out front in places we have not yet gone, beckoning us to come to where he is already? I choose the forward look, though it appears riskier. This look invites us to be trend setters with God, pulled into the future God is preparing. I choose this rather than only being pushed by past and current religious practice.

Do you have faith in the future God is preparing for you, your congregation and Mennonite Church USA? Some signs of God's future are worth pondering: First, is God inviting us to become a church body that is multicultural, a reflection of "the new humanity in Christ" mentioned in Ephesians? Second, is God empowering the youngest generation in our congregations and across the church? What are they saying to us about where God is leading? Third, is God asking us to cultivate a new vision of our neighbors, near and far?

Like the learned doctor on the train, we and others may know who we are. But even if our identity earns us the benefit of the doubt, knowing where God is taking us gives shape and meaning to our future. TM

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 23, December 2, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.95 to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

DEC 8 '08
AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART IN

6

24

16

14

8 Is Christianity about IQ?
Making disciples of all nations—and all abilities—*Karen Smucker*

12 Christ-centered thinking
To follow Jesus, we must think differently.—*Betsy Headrick McCrae*

14 True harmony
Isaiah 11, Matthew 3 and Aikido—*Julie Prey-Harbaugh*

16 Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

19 Program leads young adults to ministry
—*Everett J. Thomas*

20 Church leaders say MC USA farther along in leadership development goal
—*Anna Groff*

22 Amsterdam Mennonite 400 years old

23 Germantown has 300-year anniversary

24 Florida church offers healing after rape

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Where is God taking us?—*James Schrag*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Speaking out
U.S. and Canadian Mennos need each other—*Peter Epp*

26 For the record

30 Real families
Breaking down the walls of us and them—*Regina Shands Stoltzfus*

32 Editorial
Who's having a quarterlife crisis?—*Anna Groff*

Cover: Members of the Shalom Ringers, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. Used with permission. Photo by Dottie Kauffmann

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Not politics as usual

Thanks to Rod Stafford for his article "Not Politics as Usual" (Oct. 21). Years ago I realized that change for the good will never come through the political system. Our goal as Christians should be to expand the kingdom, and that comes as we vote with our life. We as Christians spend too much time debating wether to vote "pro-life" or about peace and social concerns. I do still vote, even though I haven't trusted a president since Jimmy Carter. However, I know that real change comes as we Christians roll up our sleeves and work to carry out the Great Commission, to serve each other and our neighbors and to have a positive impact on those in our sphere of influence.—*Barry J. Eckert, Barto, Pa.*

The morning after the election

I am emotional today. Tears are streaming down my face. I cannot—nor do I want to—stop them. I went to the piano as if moved by a gentle, invisible hand and accompanied myself as I sang, "O Healing River" with a passion I haven't felt in a long time. As I sang, I remembered something my husband, Doug, told me last night, and my voice trembled as I pictured him at 6 years old in Atlanta, the lone white face in a sea of brown as he sang with his first grade class "We shall overcome someday."

Several hours later I'm in a more reflective state. I am joyful and hopeful that a kinder, more collaborative America is being born. That an impressive leap forward has been made in the healing of the wounds of oppression and injustice inflicted on a group of people in our nation's history. Yet I'm also soberly aware that many impediments to peace and understanding remain, and serious challenges face the next administration.

There are prominent voices that prefer division to unity, that excel in spreading deception and instilling fear, and these voices have a large audience. There are other voices that are gloating and dismissive, reserving their compassion for those they deem worthy. Then there's my own voice, which has at times added to the scorn and cynicism for which I feel ashamed.

I know that millions of my brothers and sisters are disappointed in the results of the election and are fearful of an Obama administration, and many of them are fellow Christians. I want to reach out to them and do my part to further understanding and bridge building. I want to listen to their concerns. I want to join them in prayer for our elected officials and the world. I want to atone for the times when I've fallen short and torn another down, and remain alert to the temptation to do it again.—*Jill Sheeler-Shenk, Scottsdale, Ariz.*

Convention theme uses unique word

The passage chosen by the planning committees for the 2009 convention in Columbus, Ohio, is a unique Scripture passage ("2009 Convention to Focus on Holy Spirit," Nov. 4). It is unique because the word "breathe" in convention theme, "Breathe and Be Filled," is based on John 20:21-22. According to Logos Bible Software, this is the only time this Greek word is used in the Koine Greek New Testament. It is also the only time it is used in the Greek Septuagint Version.

This unique usage happened when they translated the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek. It occurred in Alexandria, Egypt, around 250 B.C. The word is found in Genesis 2:7, "The Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and 'breathed' into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being."

I am eagerly waiting to see how this word will be used at the Columbus 2009 convention.—*Eldon Dean Nafziger, Goshen, Ind.*

We are not all middle class and comfortable

In "What Good News?" (Nov. 4), Everett Thomas wrote, "We are fat and happy in our North American context. Even though our retirement accounts took a hit … we still have plenty to eat and money to spend on the things we want."

This statement ignores or marginalizes the North American Mennonites who do live in poverty or on limited incomes, who may not be able to afford the health care they need, let alone the things they want. We are not all middle-class and comfortable, and I am uncomfortable with state-

IN THIS ISSUE

Developing pastors for our congregations is at the heart of a goal established for Mennonite Church USA by the Delegate Assembly in 2001. Assistant editor Anna Groff asked six leaders to assess how well we are doing with this goal (page 20). But in our cover story, Karen Smucker focuses on another part of congregational life: how to meaningfully bring into membership those with developmental disabilities too severe to understand the meaning of baptism (page 8). Betsy Headrick McCrae (page 12) offers some important goals for transforming our minds—with learnings from those with depression or bipolar disorder. Julie Prey-Harbaugh (page 14) challenges our inclination to opt for the appearance of Christian harmony, sometimes at the expense of honesty. In Real Families, columnist Regina Shands Stoltzfus reflects on the election of the first black U.S. president (page 30). In the editorial, we learn about yet another trauma for some young adults, characterized as the "quarterlife crisis" (page 32).—*Editor* ments that assume we are. If Thomas had said, "Most of us are …" the statement would be more accurate and would acknowledge the diversity of economic class that exists in our church.—*Martha Yoder Maust, Indianapolis*

What good news?

Since I recently criticized your judgement in publishing a particular article, I want to be just as quick to pass along encouragement. I felt the editorial "What Good News?" (Nov. 4) was excellent. It was encouraging and helpful for Christians in general, not only Mennonites. Thank you.—*Merle Mullet, Goshen, Ind.*

I have no difficulty questioning some of the things I see coming (or not coming) out of *The Mennonite.* So it is fair to tell you the editorial "What Good News?" (Nov. 4) was one of the greatest pieces of "thinking" I have seen in a long time. Thanks for having the nerve to put the question in such a way. You will probably take it on the chin for having spoken in this way. For what it is worth, you have my support in your approach.—*Jim Compton-Schmidt, Fresno, Calif.*

Mixed emotions about evangelism

I had mixed emotions after reading Everett Thomas' Nov. 4 editorial, "What Good News?" In a sense I'm a "religious mutt," too. I grew up in an Old Order Amish foster home in my first 12 years. In my teens, I became a member of the Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference. At the time they were a very conservative church, stressing the main thing of wearing a regulation garb, a plain coat. When I volunteered for voluntary service under Mennonite Central Committee, I had to get permission from the bishop because they considered MCC too worldly. The only question he asked me was, Did I wear the regulation garb? I admitted I didn't and was surprised he gave his consent for me to go. I went to Camp Landon at Gulfport, Miss. There I met my wife, a General Conference Mennonite Church member. After I left Gulfport, I attended Philadelphia Bible Institute—a fundamentalist college. We spent many evenings and days passing out tracts in Philadelphia. Many students "bragged" how many people they saved during the past weeks or months. The main thing was to keep a record as to how many. It was a strong Calvinist school that said, "Once saved, always saved" as "Eternal security." Regarding "cheap grace," I am surprised that the school didn't offer a prize for the most saved for the month.

If I hadn't met my wife, Linda, I would not have stayed a Mennonite. I'd like to thank Everett Thomas for the timely editorial.—*Jack Stauffer, Newton, Kan.*

Correction to attribution

The attribution to a reflection by Steve Dintaman (Nov. 4, page 17) neglected to acknowledge the breadth of support Betsy and Steve Dintaman receive from within Mennonite Church USA. Virginia Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Mission Network, with a ministry support team of congregations and individuals, have supported the Dintamans during their service in Lithuania. The two agencies jointly support several workers in various areas of the world. We regret that our error did not properly connect VMM with the Dintamans in the original story.—*Ryan Miller, editorial director, Mennonite Mission Network*

We cannot make peace with evil

"Dialogue Toward Peace with Iran" (Oct. 21), is at best an attempt to say we can make peace with evil no matter what. This is not true. Christianity and Islam do not mix. Islam is the enemy of Christ.

Dietrich Bonhoffer stood against Hitler, even after telling him the truth and gave up his life for doing so. Meeting with Hitler didn't change Hitler, and meeting with the Iranian president will not change him.—*Jack T. Miller, Mount Joy, Pa.*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

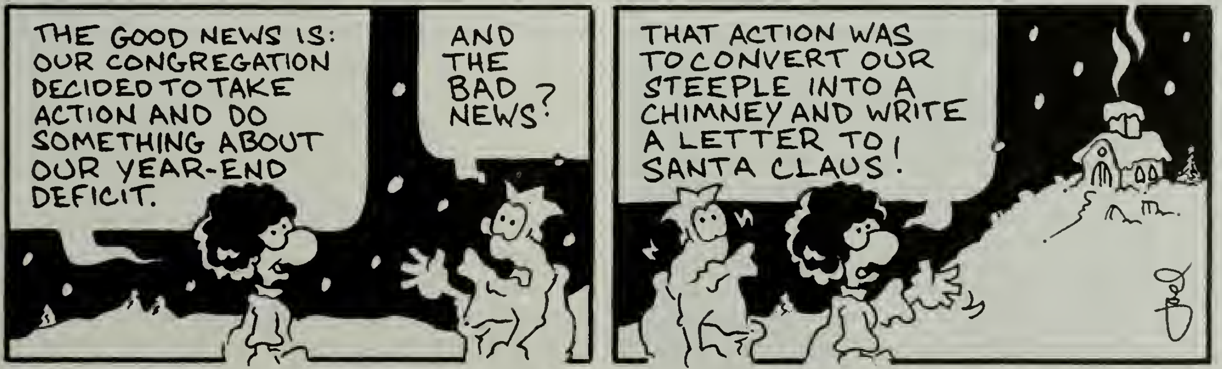
My congregation provides ways to let people with developmental disabilities join as members? (42 votes)

○ Yes (62%)
○ Not sure (24%)
○ No (7%)
○ Not applicable (7%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle

Joel Kauffmann


THE GOOD NEWS IS: OUR CONGREGATION DECIDED TO TAKE ACTION AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT OUR YEAR-END DEFICIT.
AND THE BAD NEWS?
THAT ACTION WAS TO CONVERT OUR STEEPLE INTO A CHIMNEY AND WRITE A LETTER TO SANTA CLAUS!

IN BRIEF

MC USA will cosponor peace conference

The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Church of the Brethren and Mennonite Church USA are cosponsoring "Heeding God's Call: A Gathering on Peace" Jan. 13-17, 2009, at the Arch Street Friends Meeting House, Philadelphia. The conference is a delegate-only working conference for 600 participants. Quakers, Mennonites and Brethren are invited to each send 100 participants. Other denominations will make up the other 300 participants.—*Mennonite Church USA*

Foreign correspondent visits Bluffton

Former *Washington Post* foreign correspondent Robin Wright visited the campus of Bluffton (Ohio) University on Oct. 30 and shared stories of her experiences in covering issues in the Middle East for the last 35 years. Wright said she would tell the president, "What you do will impact everyone in all societies. America's role and status will be determined by what you do in regard to Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Arab/Israeli conflict and Iran." While tens of thousands of Iraqis and Americans have lost their lives in Iraq, Wright said the sobering reality is that Iraq may be the easiest of the five challenges to deal with.—*Bluffton University*

One complaint sparks 400 calls, emails

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College fielded more than 400 calls and emails during the week of Nov. 10 after the Mike Gallagher Show criticized Goshen for not playing the national anthem before sports events.

After attending a Goshen basketball game, a man complained to the conservative radio talk show—which has 4 million listeners—that the national anthem was not played.

Bill Born, vice president of student life for Goshen, was interviewed on the show on Nov. 10. He said: "This practice of ours has been longstanding … since our inception 114 years ago. We recognize that it likely will ensue [sic] some disagreement. But again, given the freedoms of our country, we're appreciative of that opportunity to express faith and love in different ways."

On Nov. 11, Gallagher asked that listeners call Goshen and ask them to change the policy.

"There were a handful of supportive comments among the mostly dissenting voices," said Richard Aguirre, Goshen College director of public relations on Nov. 17.

"We have just moved on from this particular agenda that was set by others," said Goshen president James Brenneman Nov. 17. "Those of us who lead Mennonite institutions certainly don't want to create wedge issues that divide us."

A Nov. 11 story in the *South Bend* (Ind.) *Tribune* said Mennonite colleges and universities vary on national anthem policies.

"In this specific case," Brenneman said, "the national anthem provided the opportunity to discuss … one response that some Mennonites historically have about being faithful to the lordship of Christ.

I welcome the opportunity to be in dialogue with people with varying views … both internally and externally. That's part of the missional task in communicating to the 'world.'"

Brenneman said 1 Peter 3:15-16 provides helpful instructions for these types of issues: "Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence." —*Anna Groff*

Mary E. Klassen

AMBS commemorates death of Marcellus

On Oct. 30, Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest, carried a cross for the pilgrimage marking the martyr death of Marcellus on Oct. 30, 298. Janeen Bertsche Johnson, campus pastor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, walks to his left. AMBS commemorates Marcellus' death as a conscientious objector each year with a walk through the towns of Mishawaka and South Bend, Ind., ending at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the Notre Dame campus in South Bend, where the relics of Marcellus lie.—*Mennonite Church USA*

Israeli settlers attack Palestinian shepherds

AT-TUWANI—On Nov. 15 approximately 15 masked Israeli settlers from the illegal outpost of Havat Ma'on attacked three Palestinian shepherds who were grazing their flocks in a valley south of the outpost. The settlers came running down from a ridge above the shepherds, hurling rocks. The shepherds were able to get their flocks away before the rocks injured them.

The settlers stole two of the shepherds' donkeys. The settlers killed one donkey with a knife wound in the chest area. They slashed another across the throat, but the donkey survived.

Settlers also hit two internationals from Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT)—who were accompanying the shepherds—with large rocks. One CPT member sustained minor injuries. The Israeli police were called four times before responding to the incident. They did not respond to reports of settlers attacking Palestinian shepherds and internationals but only when they learned of the attack on the donkeys.—*CPT*

Mennonite Church USA *Equipping* now online

NEWTON, Kan.—The *Equipping* resource packet for pastors and lay leaders is now available online at www.MennoniteUSA.org/equipping.

The free publication was originally mailed 10 times each year. The online publication went live in June, and regular updates will be available online before the traditional print publication reaches mailboxes. The last print publication, a November/December issue, was mailed in early November. It already has been posted online. —*Mennonite Church USA*

Nina Linton

ica van Velsen and Cara Rempel volunteer at Ten Thousand
llages in Petitcodia, N.B. The women are the youngest volun-
ers in Mennonite Central Committee's Service Opportunities
r Older People—a short-term volunteer placement program
r people of all ages.—*MCC*

LEAP participants donate money to church

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Sixteen youth participating in this year's Learning, Exploring and Participating (LEAP) program donated $1,470 to the New Millennium Church in the slums of Barranquilla, Colombia, after their visit during a nine-day trip this summer.

The church, which feeds 50 displaced children during the week, had walls but no roof. For the students' visit, church leaders constructed a makeshift roof from a tarp. When the youth returned to the United States, some couldn't stop thinking about the church without a roof. When the summer program ended, those who had stayed in contact through Facebook decided they wanted to help finish the unfinished church. One person suggested that if they each raised or donated $100 they would have $1,600 to give to the church —although the group did not quite reach its goal.

LEAP, a year-long mentoring program for high school youth, is hosted by Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg.—*EMS*

Winter Relief Project brings hope to Mongolia

BAYANKHONGOR, Mongolia—During the coldest six months in Mongolia, the temperature averages zero degrees Fahrenheit, causing many families to consume their food and fuel supplies by March—long before the mercury creeps upward.

Last year, Joint Christian Services—a consortium of mission agencies in Mongolia—initiated the Bayankhongor Winter Relief Project in cooperation with area churches and the provincial government. Through this project, families exchanged three-and-a-half days of work for a month's supply of meat, flour, rice and vegetable oil. Mennonite Board of Missions, a predecessor agency of Mennonite Mission Network, joined eight other organizations to help found JCS in 1992. —*Mennonite Mission Network*

MCC, BIC Church address hunger in Zimbabwe

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee is supporting Zimbabwe's Brethren in Christ Church in providing emergency food supplies to 23 high schools after a four-month delay imposed by the government because of political tensions. The Brethren in Christ Church is distributing 72 tons of wheat and soybeans to 23 high schools in Matobo District, a rural area in southwestern Zimbabwe. The food distribution was delayed from June until September because of government restrictions on humanitarian aid following the disputed presidential election, according to a consultant to the food relief program.—*MCC*

Kansas City's oldest organ in Mennonite church

KANSAS CITY, Kan.—The newest member of Rainbow Mennonite Church is the oldest organ in Kansas City: an 1869 two-manual made by the Hook Organ Company in Boston. After a long journey from New York and a lengthy restoration process, this will be its first Christmas making music in six years.

The organ made its debut at Rainbow on Nov. 16. When Roseanne Penner Kaufman and Carol Buller of the organ committee first visited the organ in New York, they peeked inside to find it had been repaired with paper clips and string. But it still played.—*Debra Sapp-Yarwood*

Ontario youth prepare for Paraguay 2009

KITCHENER, Ont.—Forty-five youth and leaders from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC) committed to attend Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Assembly 15 in Paraguay in July 2009.

For the 21 teenage girls, 14 boys and their 10 leaders, it is a big financial commitment—$1,500 each, plus helping raise the additional $90,000 to cover the total $3,500-per-person cost. The planning team created application forms for participants and invited MCEC youth to apply. Applicants were required to tell their "up-to-now" life story and to articulate their reasons for wanting to go to Paraguay. Most had little or no international experience but expressed a keen sense of wanting to learn from and understand people from around the world who are different. They said they expect attending this global gathering will change them. —*MWC*

—*compiled by Anna* Groff

IN BRIEF

Denlinger new Laurelville director

John H. Denlinger begins as the new executive director of Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa., in 2009. Denlinger has been pastor at Ridgeview Mennonite Church in Gordonville, Pa., since 2000. He also served as director of church relations, development and advancement at Locust Grove Mennonite School, Smoketown, Pa., and director of athletics at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.—*Laurelville*

Mathies acting president for Conrad Grebel

Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., has appointed Ronald Mathies as acting president during the study leave of President Henry Paetkau from Jan.1 to June 30, 2009. Mathies, director and associate professor of peace and conflict studies at Grebel from 1986 to 1996, served as the executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada from 1996 to 2005 and was a Senior Fellow at the Center for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo from 2006 to 2008. He returned to Grebel in 2005 as the Rodney and Lorna Sawatsky Visiting Scholar. —*Conrad Grebel University College*

Some people's gifts are easily seen, but what about the ones in our churches who are unable to make a clear statement of personal faith?

A part of the church: Nancy Schantz

Supplied

Is Christianity

by Karen Smucker

In 1984, Erma and Wilfred Martens were part of a small group that asked how the church could demonstrate that their daughter Linda was part of the church body. Their other daughter had been baptized, but Linda had developmental disabilities, and her ability to express her walk with Jesus was limited. The group did not see why Linda should be excluded from the faith community.

When approached, pastor Ted Braun felt that both Linda and the church were ready for this step. He and a small group met with Linda to discuss, at her level, what baptism meant. The Mennonite Brethren Church, to which the Martenses belong, practices immersion, but they felt immersion would not work for Linda. The group developed a plan to have her baptized in the baptistry but by pouring. Pastor Braun and Linda's sponsors practiced the ceremony twice, including the question, "Linda, do you love Jesus?" Linda, whose verbal skills are limited, parroted the question in response. However, during the actual ceremony, when asked, "Linda, do you love Jesus?" she responded with a resounding yes.

about IQ?

Making disciples of all nations—and all abilities

Our history as Mennonites, who practice believer's baptism, has served most of us well. The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective states that baptism with water not only cleanses us from sin but baptizes us into the body of Christ—a covenant community. Each person is to use his or her gifts for the benefit of the church and enable God to work through us. Some people's gifts are easily seen, but what about the Lindas in our churches who are unable to make a clear statement of personal faith? How do we include them in our faith community? What impact do our strategies, or lack of them, have on the person's family?

The West Coast Mennonite Central Committee Developmental Disabilities Committee (DDC) asked ourselves these questions. We wanted to know if churches were finding ways to help families and people with severe disabilities feel a part of the church community. We wanted to know if churches were finding creative ways to include those unable to make a personal faith statement. We also wanted to know if church communities understood the need to make people with disabilities and their families feel wanted and needed by the faith community. We decided to ask.

In 2006, we sent surveys to a pastor and to a lay person in each Mennonite Church USA, Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ congregation in the West Coast MCC area, with a return rate of about 16 percent. For this survey, "cognitive disability" was defined as significant limitations in intellectual functioning, social skills, daily living skills and ability to function within the community. We asked if churches had attendees with cognitive disabilities and asked for pastors' thoughts on baptizing people with DD.

Over half the returned surveys indicated that a person with cognitive disabilities attended their church. With a moderate return rate, our first impression was that churches with attendees with DD were more likely to return surveys on the topic than those with no attendees. For perspective, we looked at a survey conducted by the DDC in 1980, in which almost 100 percent of the surveys were returned, encouraged by intensive follow-up with churches. The 1980 survey showed slightly less than half the churches reported an attendee with developmental disabilities. There are at least two ways to look at the information from the two surveys. If the current survey faithfully represents the constituent churches, it indicates a slight rise in the number of churches relating to people with cognitive disabilities. However, the low number of responses may reflect a lack of interest in the churches, indicating a drastically reduced number of churches who relate to people with disabilities. With either interpretation, the survey results indicate that the question of how to include people with DD is not a theory to discuss but a need to be addressed.

The current survey showed that if a person with DD were able to communicate a statement of faith in some form, pastors saw no problems with baptism for the person. This was not surprising, as it is consistent with believer's baptism. Pastors were much less comfortable baptizing someone with DD who was unable to make a clear statement of faith, even if the person or his/her family requested it. Even less likely was baptism of someone with little to no understanding of the ritual, even if the family requested it. Again, considering our strong emphasis on believer's baptism, this was not surprising, but what message does it send to families?

The committee had high hopes of gaining some strategies for including people in the family of faith, but few ideas were given. Only two churches described a clear plan. One pastor described the ritual as "similar to a child blessing. The individual is recognized in the midst of familial and congregational support. It can be done individually or in conjunction with another event, such as baptism, child blessing or even Communion." Another church reported, "We provide alternative member-

Continued on page 10

Can we learn to see the marvelous gifts those with DD bring to the church? The gift of loving without question.

Continued from page 9

ship categories, which include small discernment groups and public ceremonies of acceptance.” Apparently, only a few churches have plans in place for including people with cognitive disabilities.

Pastors in the surveys did express a desire to learn ways to help those with DD feel welcomed and included in the community of faith. Here is a task for the church at the national as well as local level. Think of a family whose child or sibling has severe cognitive impairment yet wants to be part of the community. Imagine the joy when the pastor is able to say without hesitation, “Yes, he [or she] is welcome here. This is what we do to signify that [name] is part of our congregation.”

Here is one example of how Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church (AMC) found a way to include Nancy Schantz as a member. Her parents, John and Marge Schantz, believed that Nancy’s cognitive disabilities were too severe for her to understand the ritual of baptism. John says, “All it would have meant to her is she stood up front and got her head wet.” However, John and Marge believed it was important to find some way of saying officially that Nancy was a member of the church. John talked to their pastor, Lynn Miller, who agreed that baptism was not the best choice for Nancy and that although the congregation accepted Nancy she had never been a member. Lynn and John developed a plan. One Sunday morning, the Schantzes brought Nancy to the front of the church. Lynn explained what they were doing and why. Nancy signed, with her own distinctive mark, the membership book. Later, Lynn wrote Nancy’s name and a brief explanation. In a recent communication, former pastor Miller stated, “In the case of Nancy Schantz, I believe the actual visual ritual (though not baptism) was important, but the result is more important—that is, Nancy is now on the AMC membership list, so when the list was divided among the elders, she ‘got an elder.’ That has resulted in another meaningful bridge between her and people in the congregation.”

It is unlikely that one approach would fit all churches and all situations. But what does it take to help churches be prepared? We as Mennonites provide resources for churches online at the Anabaptist Disabilities Network (ADNet) www.adnetonline.org/churches. What about our leadership? Are our seminaries helping their students think about including people with DD? One thing we know: Prevalence figures show that any possible lack of participation in congregations is not due to a low number of people with DD. When a family who has a child with DD comes to church, that family may be sensitive, maybe overly sensitive, to feeling merely tolerated or even unwelcome. A congregation that discusses and makes a plan for including children and adults with DD will demonstrate not merely tolerance but welcome.

When Jesus said, “Come,” did he mean everyone? Is Christianity about IQ? In 1 Corinthians 1:26a-27a, Paul writes: “Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise” (NIV). By the world’s standards, those with DD number among the foolish. Are we judging others by the world’s standard? Can we learn to see the marvelous gifts those with DD bring to the church? The gift of loving without question. The gift of compassion. The gift of a smile. Churches who treasure the gifts of people with DD have learned that Christianity is not about IQ. It is about loving others.

Karen Smucker is program director of Exceptional Child for Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, Idaho.

Being rather than doing

Paul Leichty went to church with a man with intellectual disability who used to always greet him with, ”God bless you, Paul.”

Leichty, executive director of Anabaptist Disabilities Network (ADNet), says this was a way for the man to express his faith. Other individuals, for example, may show it through their church attendance.

“There’s something about the way [people with intellectual disabilities] help us reflect on being rather than doing,” he says. ”We’ve tended to see faith in terms of action … yet faith is also dependence on God.”

He says ADNET has no formal policies regarding people with intellectual disabilities and baptism but instead works with congregations on an individual basis.

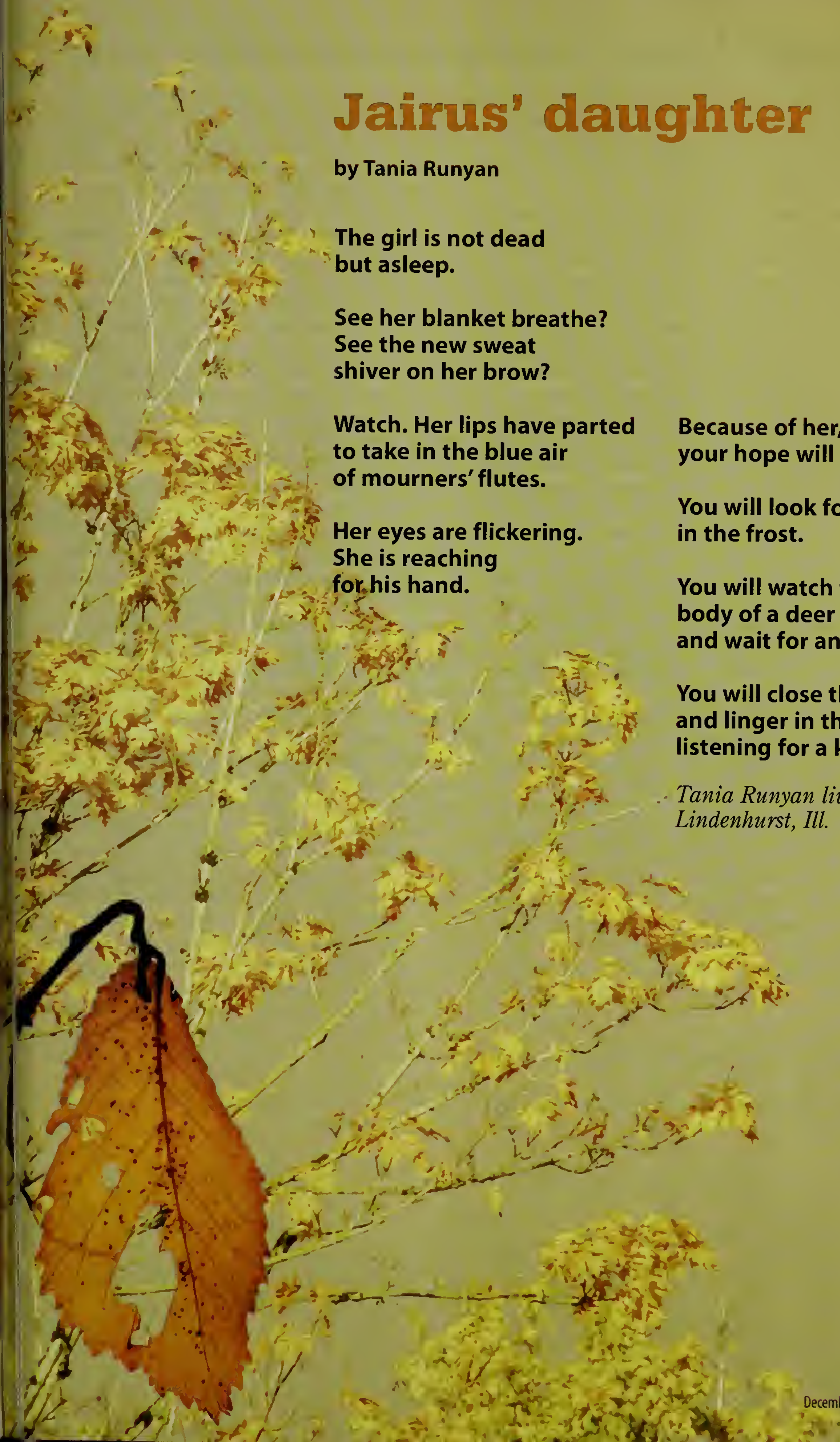
Leichty says most people are comfortable with baptism when an individual is capable of communicating a statement of faith, but it becomes difficult when someone cannot communicate a statement.

Perspectives from families who have members with intellectual disabilities offer insights to the church, he says, as what often creates tension is the whole issue of belonging.

”Baptism is a clear statement that someone belongs to that church,” he says. ”For some families, anything less than baptism is seen as second class.”

But many churches work at these issues of belonging in creative ways by finding other symbols to include children, youth and adults during their journey to baptism.

”Faith is not just an intellectual assent to a body of belief,” he says, ”but there are other ways people with intellectual disabilities can express their faith.”—*Anna Groff*



Jairus' daughter

by Tania Runyan

The girl is not dead
but asleep.

See her blanket breathe?
See the new sweat
shiver on her brow?

Watch. Her lips have parted
to take in the blue air
of mourners' flutes.

Her eyes are flickering.
She is reaching
for his hand.

Because of her,
your hope will be stirred.

You will look for snowdrops
in the frost.

You will watch the roadside
body of a deer
and wait for an ear to flutter.

You will close the casket
and linger in the parlor,
listening for a knock.

Tania Runyan lives in Lindenhurst, Ill.

To follow Jesus, we must think differently.

Since June I have been part of a support group for people living with depression or bipolar disorder that meets at our church roughly every other week. Meeting with this group has been helpful to me. I have learned much.

One of the things I've learned is that the brain and the mind are not necessarily the same thing. Mental illness is a malfunctioning of the brain. This is often caused by a chemical imbalance. Your thoughts and feelings are greatly affected. But this doesn't mean you've lost your mind. In fact, it seems that holding onto your mind, taking charge of your thoughts, using your ability to think proactively even when it takes great effort, is key—along with medication and therapy—to being able to keep the debilitating effects of the illness at bay.

One of the symptoms of depression and bipolar disorder is negative thinking. These illnesses often make it difficult for folks to see things in a positive or realistic way. They cause cognitive disorder, which means that what you think may only partially be true or may not be true at all. But the thoughts are there. They come automatically. And they lead to feelings of sadness and hopelessness even before you are aware of what's happening. Once it starts, it's a downward spiral of despair.

What can be done about negative thinking? You can't just "think positive" and overcome your mood disorder. But if this is happening to you, you may learn to spot negative thoughts, see them for what they are and confront them with more realistic ideas. You may think yourself out of the spiral and onto more level emotional ground. And this new way of thinking can change your life.

In Romans Paul calls the believers in the fledgling church in Rome to a new way of thinking. "Do not be conformed to this world," he writes "but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect" (12:2).

That sounds like advice on negative thinking: "Don't let the chemical imbalance of your brain dictate how you feel and act. Instead think new thoughts so that you can act in good and healthy ways and you can remember that you are good and acceptable, even if not perfect."

This helps me understand what Paul is getting at. Like a chemical imbalance in the brain, the value system of the world in which we live sends us powerful signals. These signals come fast and hard and have an immediate effect: You are what you own. You need more. Happiness can be purchased. Thrills are what you're after. People are not to be trusted. Life is dangerous. Violence is necessary. And on and on. One message after another, endlessly, racing, loud and bright, sweeping us into a downward spiral of self-centeredness, loneliness, greed and despair, from which we cannot escape.

It takes a concerted effort to counteract these messages from our culture. It takes effort to break into and change this pattern before it shapes who we are. It takes an effort much like the effort that folks living with depression or bipolar disorder have to make each day to keep themselves on an even keel. If we truly want to follow Jesus, we must consciously choose to think differently. We must focus on Christ and practice thinking differently until this new Christ-centered thinking becomes who we are.

Paul gives us practical examples of what it means to think in a new and alternative way. "Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good" (12:9). "Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another" (12:12-16).

These are practical actions, yes, but they are also countercultural. They go against the societal grain. If they are to become part of who we are and what we do they will require some intentional thought, some disciplined Christ-centered thinking. According to Paul, this is at the core of basic Christian living.

It takes a concerted effort to counteract the negative messages from our culture.

Christ-cen

by Betsy Headrick McCrae

People who live with depression or bipolar disorder are well aware of how much effort and commitment it takes to keep themselves from being pulled into the damaging downward spiral of negative thinking. They've learned it takes practice. And that they cannot expect too much too soon. It helps to have realistic goals. We who want to think new, Christ-centered thoughts in the midst of the pull of the world's value system can benefit from taking this approach as well. We, too, can set goals to help us transform our minds.

Keep it simple. What is it we want to do? We want to follow Jesus Christ.

Break it into small steps. Love genuinely. Honor others. Use your gifts for the good of the community. Enter into the joys and concerns of others. Be patient when things are difficult. Pray. Give generously of time and money. Welcome strangers. Don't curse your enemies; bless them instead. Rejoice and be glad.

Choose a starting point. Where in your life do you feel a disconnect between what you profess to believe and what you do? Are you impatient with your co-workers? Do you find yourself avoiding people who are in difficulty or need support? Do you feel frustrated by demands on your time or your money? Are you afraid you'll not have enough? Do you harbor hatred against someone who has slighted you? Do you not care about those who are hurting? Are you unable to pray? Choose one area. Start there.

Act on your plan. Take time to focus on Jesus. Look at the situation before you with the eyes of faith. What is it I am being pulled toward? Is it where I want to go? What if I did things differently? Can I do things differently? Yes, I can make a choice. In this situation I can choose to give instead of hoard. I can choose to listen instead of ignore. I can choose to let go of my anger. I can choose to trust. I can do this one thing at this time because I know this is the way of Jesus, whom I follow. I can think a new thought, a Christ-centered thought, and my actions will follow.

Evaluate and make adjustments. Things do not always go as we wish. Even with the best intentions, sometimes we fail—miserably. And the only way to move forward is to wait, heal and ask for help. Sometimes it's impossible for people who live with depression or bipolar disorder to function well. Even if the individual takes medication, goes to therapy regularly and actively works to restructure negative thought patterns, a crisis will happen. At that time the person may be actively psychotic or even suicidal and pretty much unable to do basic things. Support and understanding from those around the individual are essential to help bring things back to a more stable place.

This is also true of our walk with God. There are times when everything falls apart. We lose our focus. We are unable to cope. And the only thing we can do, as we look up from the bottom of the pit, is cry out to God. In our helplessness we throw ourselves on the mercy of the One who loves us more than we can imagine or understand. And we wait, heal and start over again.

Where in your life do you feel a disconnect between what you profess to believe and what you do?

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." When you read these words, remember the brave folks among us who live with depression and bipolar disorder. Remember as they do that the messages you see and hear are not always what is real or what should be. Learn to stop and think. Use your mind as well as your heart. Look to Jesus for guidance. Don't be afraid to think new, Christ-centered thoughts. Let your mind be transformed and your actions will follow.

Betsy Headrick McCrae is pastor of Glennon Heights Mennonite Church in Lakewood, Colo. This article is adapted from a sermon she preached there on Aug. 24.

ered thinking

iStockphoto.com

True harmony

by Julie Prey-Harbaugh

> We prefer exterior calm to the truer, stronger harmony of a conflict seen through to its resolution.

God's harmony is at hand. With the coming of the Christ is the beginning of a new day of harmony, when all God's creatures set aside their differences and get along with one another, as Isaiah 11:1-3, 6-10 states. Isaiah tells us of a leader whose reign is unlike any we have seen, one whose decisions usher in a time of harmony and peace. This is the Advent picture we know and love—Christ comes, and all is well. Now let's go back to the verses that hold these two parts of the passage together. Verses 4 and 5 show us how this harmonious reign will be accomplished—in the less comforting language of warfare and judgment. Somehow, striking and killing and judgment enter the strategy for implementing this reign of peace. Though peace may be the result, its beginning is not without conflict.

Perhaps this is why those who put together the lectionary placed these texts with Matthew 3:1-12, where notions of harmony seem to be absent. As John the baptizer announced the coming of the reign of heaven in his time, according to Matthew, there would be little about its arrival that could be described as harmonious. For all the green pastureland that may come of this new world, John lays out its entrance in clashing terms: trees with bad fruit? Goners. Chaff? Out. Children of Abraham? Don't be so cocky. Everyone is subject to the fire of this new one's baptism, and only the wholesome wheat and the fruit-producing tree and the truest child of Abraham will make the cut. The rest will be cleared from the premises. Harmony may be the end result, but it is not central to the process of bringing to reality this Advent hope.

After reading all this, I was left wondering about harmony. From the Isaiah passage at least, we can see that it is a gift of the reign of heaven, a promise for us to reach toward, to count on for the future. But is it something we can hope for now in our lives? Or is it something that can come only when conflict ceases and peace reigns, when the way of the Lord is made straight?

With these questions raised by the Bible, I turned to the text of my life to sort out how I practice harmony in my life.

I am a black belt in Aikido, a Japanese defensive art. It's a more recent martial art, created by its founder in response to the violence he witnessed as a child and the devastation of his country as a result of World War II. The founder was concerned that conflicts escalated inescapably toward destruction, from the smallest interpersonal clash to battles of international scale. He reoriented his martial expertise toward transforming conflicts into peaceful ends. Aikido, the art he created, translates into English as "the way of harmony."

In Aikido, we learn to be centered and strong in the face of something frightening and uncertain. This is partially because we can see what is there. In a physical conflict, animosity becomes concrete. An attacker's action shows his or her intent. Blocking, freezing, lashing out in return or running away can be harmful to me (or the attacker), but harmonizing with the movement can bring both the attacker and me to safety. Harmonizing in the midst of a conflict brings the situation to resolution, makes an opportunity to establish peace.

This differs from the way we typically think of harmony in

iStockphoto.com

Isaiah 11, Matthew 3 and Aikido

church, which is why the Isaiah and Matthew passages were initially so dissonant for me. Mennonites, because we focus on community, on unity within the body of Christ and peacemaking with others, are susceptible to misunderstanding concepts such as harmony. We are pacifists because we long for peace, stability, calm, quiet, the harmonious reign of God. If we find that all is peaceful, stable, calm and quiet, we think harmony abounds. When conflicts, arguments, disagreements and unrest arise, harmony seems to disappear, and we think something is horribly wrong. We are shaken, uncomfortable, nervous, even afraid. In church, and in our other relationships, we find conflict distressing. We are afraid to enter it and face its consequences. So we opt for the appearance of harmony—the absence of conflict as long as we can maintain it—sometimes at the expense of honesty and always at the expense of growth as individuals and as a community. We prefer exterior calm to the truer, stronger harmony of a conflict seen through to its resolution. We keep the peace and say we are one step closer to the harmonious reign of God.

But these Scripture passages challenge us to think of harmony in a different way, not as passive and static but active and dynamic. Both Isaiah and Matthew put harmony and conflict hand in hand. Preparing the way of the Lord, ushering in the reign of heaven, cannot happen without conflict, without the cleansing of the Holy Spirit and fire. This is Advent, the breaking in of the reign of God into our everyday, our status quo. This is the coming of the Christ, disrupting our calm, interrupting our routines, shattering the appearance of harmony for the sake of building a lasting, eternal peace.

Through this lens, then, the conflicts we experience in our lives don't have to be setbacks. They can be opportunities to experience dissonance and act on it, to move with it and ultimately to participate in the act of harmonizing what God is doing in the world. The reign of God is coming, moving in our world dynamically. We can choose to participate with it or resist it, engage it or ignore it. True harmony requires that we act, that we enter the fray and turn fights into dances.

It is in our willingness to engage one another when conflicts arise—in our families, workplaces, schools, neighborhoods and churches—that we find our greatest hope for harmony. Until Christ returns to finally transform our battlefields into pastures, we bring harmony by being willing to take that step into conflict, into the fray—to see things as they are and blend with them, know a situation is difficult and move with it, understand that something is terribly wrong and use its energy to guide it toward the good.

This is our hope because it is precisely the kind of action from which our entire faith comes. In Advent, we celebrate a God who moved with us, who, rather than staying apart and avoiding the messiness of our conflict-ridden lives, chose to be one of us, to harmonize with our way of life and transform it from the inside. In the life of Christ, by harmonizing with our human nature, God showed us what humanity can be by meeting us where we are and guiding us toward where we should go. In the death of Christ, by harmonizing with humanity's darkest side, God submitted fully to our inclination toward violence and resistance of God's way of peace. In the resurrection of Christ, by harmonizing again with the good to come, God demonstrated that life and hope can be the winners in even our most vicious conflicts.

It is in our willingness to engage one another when conflicts arise that we find our greatest hope for harmony.

The Communion table is set in celebration of that life and that hope. As we come together to eat the bread and drink from the cup, let us remember God's harmonization with us in Christ, even to the point of death on the cross. Let's also share this meal together as a demonstration of our resurrection hope to harmonize with one another and become part of God's harmonious reign in our time.

God has invited us to join together to live into Advent's promise of harmony and peace. Brothers and sisters, in that hope let us come.

Julie Prey-Harbaugh is a shodan (first) level black belt in Aikido Kokikai and feels strong connections between her practice and her faith. She even preached using Aikido as an example once when preaching at her home church, West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship.

Zion Mennonite Church

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA

Zion Mennonite Church sits in the small rural town of Hubbard, Ore. In an area where some people have never even heard of Mennonites, the congregation is distinctive. Jana Gingerich, associate and youth pastor of the church, believes that "our Anabaptist beliefs and heritage make us unique in this community." Adds pastor Todd Lehman: "We're distinctive because of our congregation. I like to think of Zion as a garden: There is a large variety of different plants here, but the overall effect is one of beauty and nourishment."—*Hannah Yoder*

JESUS IS LORD
2

1. Bible school participants make their own "olive tree" after learning about Israelis and their dependence on these trees.
2. The front of our sanctuary. The peace candle that we light as part of our worship service every Sunday is in the foreground.
3. Our associate and youth pastor, Jana Gingerich
4. Our pastor, Todd Lehman
5. We have a "peace garden" outside our church. The poles say, "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in different languages. As we interact with people and organizations from around the world who are working for peace, we add the appropriate language to the peace garden.
6. View of the front of the church
7. Many people from our congregation spend a significant amount of time working in our garden. The food grown there is given to local families in need.—*hy*

The Mennonite invites others to submit photos and a description of their congregations. Contact gordonh@themennonite.org.

7
6
5
May Peace Prevail On Earth
Que La Paz Prevalezca En La Tierra
我们祝愿世界人类的和平
Möge Friede auf Erden sein
יהי שלום עלי אדמות

U.S. and Canadian Mennos need each other

Peter Epp attends Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Fifty-six Americans. Apparently, this was the U.S. remnant of our formerly thriving binational family. Mennonite Church Canada's family gathering with Mennonite Church USA at last summer's summit, "At the Crossroads," was clearly missing some members. It was as if Grandpa and Grandma had died and the surviving family suddenly saw no reason to get together anymore. The saddest part was that I couldn't even remember there having been a funeral.

Was this it? seemed to be the question on everyone's lips, followed by another: How did this even happen?

It all seemed so fresh hopeful to me at my first assembly—Wichita '95—as a youth. The MCs (Mennonite Church members) and the GCs (General Conference Mennonite Church members) were coming together. We were witnessing history: Mennonite denominations coming together, not breaking apart. By the day after the merger, however, I already heard rumblings about a new split. Eventually came two national denominations: MC USA and MC Canada.

The reasons for the new split sounded ambiguous and complex, but a common theme seemed to be a Canadian concern that our (I was attending an MC Canada congregation at the time) unique national perspective would be overlooked. We Canadians seemed skeptical that our American brothers and sisters would remember to notice just how different we were. There was some legitimacy to the claim; we certainly were outnumbered enough to believe it could happen.

Just a few binational conventions later, in Charlotte, N.C., those fears got the better of us. MC Canada and MC USA, it appeared, would be unable to collaborate on a binational convention in Canada. Canadians felt slighted.

My Canadian identity found it easy to see how Canadians saw their fears coming true. My American identity (I am a dual citizen, and I now attend an MC USA congregation) found it easy to see that a Canadian convention would raise the cost to a level that was nearly unacceptable. Unfortunately, it didn't seem easy to understand each other. So we decided to forget the binational delegate sessions and plan what became the Winnipeg summit. The idea was to come together to focus on common issues, but we didn't really come together at all.

Have we become so ambivalent about our brothers and sisters across the border that we will let the dwindling momentum at the Winnipeg summit run its course? I say no.

First, the numbers—membership and giving—in both denominations are declining. As a young adult, I recognize we will need to pool our resources soon—financial, human and spiritual.

Second, pooling worldwide resources is already a growing part of our denominational fabric. But while we're sewing connections worldwide, we neglect a tear in our own continent. Mennonite World Conference is alive and well. The existence and work of AMIGOS, its young adult branch, is evidence it might even grow in the future. For the first time, North American Mennonites are grappling with the fact that most of our global church is not ethnically Mennonite. In our own continent, however, we seem unable to overcome a relatively minor cultural divide. Though both of our national churches are increasingly diverse, we still share history, influences and issues that make MC Canada and MC USA similar. To nurture deeper relationships with our global neighbors we will need to begin with our most similar neighbors.

Both our similarities and our differences call us to greater cooperation. We share similar attitudes, influences and affluence. We can be of better service to our global community if we grapple with issues together. How do we deal with having so much in a world with so many have-nots? How do we respond to the fact that our countries are two of the richest and refuse to abide by the Kyoto Accord? Our differences need dialogue, too. U.S. Mennonites could help Canadians achieve a more active and divergent peace stance. Canadian Mennonites could help Americans see the subtle consequences of living in a militaristic society.

I hope Winnipeg '08 was not the funeral for our binational relationship but will remind us what we could lose. I hope a renewed relationship will spawn new summits that will help us find faithfulness as national bodies and as a unified family. TM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Guiding angels and Rachel's tears**—Dave Stevens
- **Christmas carols**—Karen Sutherland

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

Program leads young adults to ministry

Assessment shows long-term impact of 20-year-old Ministry Inquiry Program.

Twenty years ago, Goshen (Ind.) College sent its first students into congregations as part of a new Ministry Inquiry Program (MIP). Since then, 154 Goshen students have spent one summer in ministry. They planned and led worship, taught Bible school and Sunday school, led music, participated in pastoral visits and preached.

At the request of the presidents of the Mennonite Church USA colleges and universities and in collaboration with Mennonite Education Agency, Goshen developed an assessment of its MIP program.

Since MIP works with Mennonite Church USA conferences and congregations, the study focused only on Mennonite students. To learn about a students' later involvement in church ministry, the study used Mennonite Church USA's database listing leaders with ministerial credentials and Goshen's database. The study looked for students who were eventually credentialed or who are currently listed in the database as pastors, youth pastors or assistant pastors.

Justin Heinzekehr, coordinator for institutional research at Goshen, led the study.

"When we separate the Mennonite graduates who participated in MIP from those who did not," Heinzekehr says, "it is clear that the MIP participants are much more likely to become pastors or credentialed leaders: 24.6 percent as opposed to 2.1 percent."

The effect of the MIP experience is not immediate, however, the study discovered.

"Many [MIP] graduates don't immediately decide to become pastors," Heinzekehr says, "and so a higher percentage of people end up with credentials after a longer period of time. ... The graduates from the period 1989-1993 have had a longer period of time to go through seminary study or to make career decisions leading them to a ministry role. Thus we see a small increase ... with each additional five-year period ... after graduation."

The study concludes that the Ministry Inquiry Program is successful in leading students into positions of church leadership. However, it takes a while for the seeds planted during the MIP experience to come to fruition.

"MIP does succeed in this to a greater extent than other summer activities available to students," says Heinzekehr, "and it does result in some additional students going into ministry positions who probably would not have done so otherwise. However, MIP was not especially successful in terms of graduates ending up in pastor/credentialed positions until after the later 1990s—10 years into the program. This suggests that long-term investment in programs such as MIP is very important."

Although there seems to be a lag time—of 10 years or more—for MIP graduates to enter pastoral ministry, a higher percentage of recent MIP graduates have taken this step.

"More recent graduates actually have taken credentialed or pastor positions at a higher rate than earlier graduates," says Heinzekehr, "This suggests that the MIP program has been increasingly effective from 1988 to the present—enough so to completely offset the effects of time on the percent of graduates in these ministry positions."

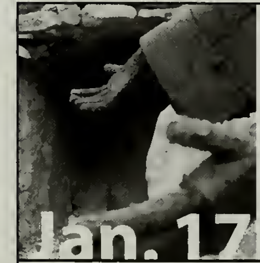
Funds for the program are provided by colleges and universities, Mennonite Church USA, a student's home congregation and conference. The study confirms that the money is well-spent.

"Long-term investment in programs such as MIP is very important," Heinzekehr says. "Young adult leadership development takes commitment from church organizations to put resources into programs like MIP.

"If we are to successfully attract young adult leaders in the current context of disengagement from the church, we must continue to invest in young adult leadership programs and consider how we might encourage more youth to participate."

According to Mennonite Education Agency, all five Mennonite Church USA colleges and universities currently offer the Ministry Inquiry Program to their students.—*Everett J. Thomas*

MIP participants are much more likely to become pastors or credentialed leaders.
—Justin Heinzekehr



AMBS

Jan. 17 Lent Planner

Our lives are in your hands...

Explore ideas for prayers, dramatic readings, children's time, and music and visual elements for the season of Lent.
Presenters: Rosanna McFadden, Marlene Kropf and Rebecca Slough

*Hosted by the Church Leadership Center at **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary**, Elkhart Ind. Visit **www.ambs.edu/workshops** or call **574.296.6269** for details and registration.*

Church leaders say MC USA farther along in leadership development goal

Leadership development was one of four main priorities established by Mennonite Church USA delegates when the denomination was formed in 2001. Anna Groff asked six leaders to assess progress toward this goal.—*Editor*

Kraybill evaluates MC USA leadership development efforts

Mennonite Church USA is farther along than it was six years ago in leadership development because many different entities are taking initiative, but we lack a coordinated denominational plan that would make these efforts most effective. Congregations, conferences and educational institutions play a new or expanded role in leadership development by designing programs that tap people on the shoulder who may become pastors, missionaries, teachers or administrators. Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church, for example, runs a Who's Next? program to equip leaders from within the congregation. Colleges and seminaries collaborate to run the Ministry Inquiry Program. The Center for Anabaptist Leadership in Pasadena, Calif., trains scores of leaders from multiple ethnic groups.

The fastest growing program at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., is the Church Leadership Center, which offers non-degree and continuing education courses. Mennonite conferences plan their own events or programs. Conference ministers are developing a list of "core competencies" for pastoral leadership to give guidance for the multiple tracks of pastoral training now emerging.

What has been lacking amid this ferment is a coordinated strategy on a denomination-wide level to make Anabaptist leadership development an urgent priority. Our missional agenda will have us galloping off in many different directions if we do not have shared theology and coordinated leadership formation. Mennonite seminaries and pastoral training programs struggle because they are buried several layers down into the denominational structure along with dozens of other educational institutions. Schools that specifically prepare men and women to lead the church invest a lot in recruiting and educating but structurally are far from the strategic decision-making processes of the denomination. That gap is costly for the life and mission of the church, and the denomination must do better in the decade ahead.—*J. Nelson Kraybill, AMBS president*

MENNONITE FINANCIAL
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

What makes us different?

Contributions Direct

Because we believe in the importance of supporting the church, we make our electronic bill payment program available free if used to make regular, automatic contributions to a church or other charity.*

Contributions Direct: *Just one more way our members put their values into practice through everyday financial transactions.*

www.mennonitefinancial.com

Financial services for the Anabaptist community

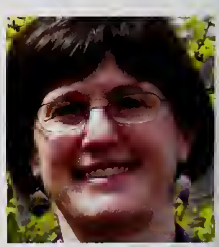
800-451-5719

Nancy Kauffmann, conference regional minister, Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

Mennonite Church USA is farther along in the goal than it was six years ago. A churchwide initiative, "Cultivating the Call," helped raise the awareness and encouraged conversations among conferences, congregations and schools. There are more conference and seminary partnership programs such as STEP (Lancaster Conference and Eastern Mennonite Seminary) and the Journey Program and the Pastoral Care Series (Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Central District and Indiana-Michigan Conferences).

More conferences, congregations and agencies such as MMA are offering leadership training grants. Some congregations are creating internships for leadership roles. At the last conference ministers meeting, a list of core skills and competencies for pastoral ministry was accepted. This is a useful tool for conferences and schools to shape leadership training. But leadership development has to be an ongoing goal. The church will continue to have leadership needs. It is and will be a challenge to work together to be good stewards of those God-given gifts.

Gay Brunt Miller, director of collaborative ministries, Franconia Mennonite Conference



I believe our seminaries are adjusting their curriculum and focusing more on equipping new leaders for more outwardly focused missional ministry than taking care of "our own." I am thrilled we are beginning to sit up and take notice of what our racial-ethnic leaders are saying. They are some of our best practitioners. How can we make sure we listen to them?

Also, are we being intentional about nurturing and making space for more women and for younger women—space that has integrity and is more than balancing numbers? Franconia Conference has more than 30 people currently on some ministry track.

If these (mostly young) people receive tools, space and encouragement, this can significantly reshape our congregations.

Stutzman: We have a long way to go to meet the needs of the church.
Kraybill: Coordinated strategy at denomination-wide level is lacking.

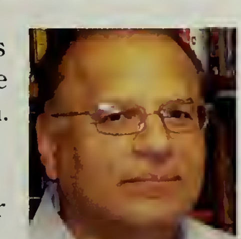
Jane Roeschley, associate pastor for worship and lay ministries, Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill.

I think the leadership development of Mennonite Church USA remains strong but, regrettably, primarily for those with access to resources. Racial-ethnic congregations and/or non-European members need stronger access to financial resources and opportunities.

As an Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary board member, I am excited to hear about enrollment increases (with a particular spike this year in 20-somethings enrollment), the !Explore Program for high school youth and the Engaging Pastors Program.

I am thrilled by the increasing young adult contribution to conversations at conventions. The intentional cultivation of young adult delegates at the last three conventions has noticeably enlarged the young adult engagement. One of my daughters spent a rewarding summer at Madison (Wis.) Mennonite through the Ministry Inquiry Program and another daughter with the LEAD NOW leadership exploration experience sponsored by Indiana-Michigan and Central District conferences.

Marco Güete, associate conference minister, Western District Conference



Eleven of the 16 congregations in Western District Conference (WDC) are Hispanic-American. The European-American and Hispanic-American traditions have the same expectations for pastors. The difference is that European-Americans often have college or seminary theological training before they receive a call from a church, while the Hispanic-Americans first receive the call to serve as pastor or church planter and later seek the theological training.

Mennonite Church USA is farther along in the goal of leadership development. Examples: a church planters' retreat with an intensive 30-hour Anabaptist Biblical Institute course, "Introduction to the Anabaptist Theology" in Texas; "Cultivating a Call" retreat for pastors and church planters; the Anabaptist Biblical Seminary (Seminario), a pilot certificate program from AMBS-Great Plains extension offered in Dallas—a key source of formation in the Spanish language for Hispanic-American pastors. The Seminario and Institute are the alternative education for local formation of the Hispanic-American pastors fulfilling WDC requirements.—*Anna Groff (to read the full responses from these four leaders, visit www.themennonite.org)*

Stutzman evaluates MC USA leadership development efforts

If the number of grants received by church educational institutions is any measure of success on this goal, we have come a long way toward meeting the goal. Both seminaries and a number of our Mennonite colleges have received Lilly grants geared to leadership development. The grants enabled us to explore issues of theological vocation and encourage students to consider pastoral ministry. Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS) in Harrisonburg, Va., developed an emphasis on "Culture of Call" that was expanded by other colleges and the leadership office of Mennonite Church USA. We encourage "shoulder tapping" and other means of challenging young leaders to consider a Christian vocation, including pastoral ministry. Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., received a grant that helped them engage in conversations with a network of pastors, conduct research on the traits of excellent pastors and provide leadership training in the Spanish language. Another tentative sign of progress is the interest expressed by young adults in the governance and leadership of the church. The biennial convention planners have made space for young adults as delegates, which is gratifying for me to see. Again, Mennonite Church USA has attempted to bring some semblance of focus to the diverse programs that provide leadership training. A task force recently outlined six different areas in which to measure competency in leadership. Rather than prescribing ways that programs should train leaders, the group described outcomes to help training programs discern what growing leaders need to prepare them for more effective ministry.

In spite of all the work Mennonite Church USA has done to conceptualize leadership and call out new leaders, I'm not sure that many new leaders have been developed on the congregational level. We have a long way to go to meet the needs of the church or the goals we set for ourselves.—*Ervin Stutzman, EMS dean*

• • travel with a purpose • •

Mennonite Your Way

2009 TOURS

- Hawaii 4-Island Cruise *March 11-22*
- Mexico & Copper Canyon *March 27 - April 7*
- Alaska-Yukon Tour/Cruise *June 15 - July 1*
- Paraguay (MWC) & Peru *July 8 - 26*
- Lake Michigan Circle August 4-14
- Canadian Rockies *September 10 - October 1*
- Polar Bear Adventure *October 26-31*
- Europe & Passion Play *June/July/August 2010*

MYW Tours • Box 425 • Landisville, PA 17538 • 717/653-9288 • 800/296-1991
Email: myw1525@aol.com • web: www.mywtours.com

Amsterdam Mennonite 400 years old

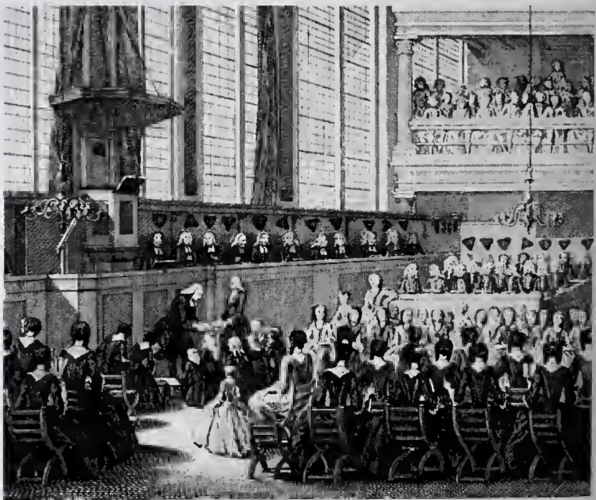
Anniversary year brings restoration, preservation and remodeling projects.

During this 400-year anniversary year, the Mennonite church in Amsterdam is undergoing restoration, preservation and some remodeling. This includes the repointing of brickwork, installation of an elevator and the transformation of a loft into a multifunctional space, accessible to all via the new elevator. The 19th-century ceiling is being restored, in the words of the contractor "not by the yard but slowly, inch-by-inch, in order to preserve the historic beauty of the past while making it conform to the safety and environmental standards of the future."

Anabaptist activity showed up in Amsterdam around the year 1531, when it was met with brutal force by the Catholic rulers of the then-Spanish Netherlands. It was not until 1578, after the so-called Alteration of Amsterdam—a new authority made up of 30 Protestants and 10 Catholics—that the followers of Menno Simons became a "reluctantly tolerated" group. Only then did the various groups of Anabaptists begin to think of buildings for their hidden churches.

In 1607, the Mennonite cloth merchant Harmen Hendriksz van Warendorp bought a large lot between the King's Canal and the Gentleman's Canal. In 1608, he used the courtyard space between them to build a wooden meetinghouse to accommodate the Flemish Anabaptist group to which he belonged.

In 1639, the old wooden structure was replaced by the current, more spacious, Singelkerk. This larger space was needed because the Flemish were uniting with the Frisian and the High German branches of the Anabaptist movement. Their first union service on April 26, 1639, attended by some 3,000 people, is said to have lasted five hours. The Singelkerk remains a good example of a "Schuilkerk," a hidden church, not visible from street side. During the summer, a four-story-high banner, draped on the scaffolding outside, read, "400 years of Mennonites on the Singel."—*Jan Gleysteen*



This 1743 line drawing by S. Fokke shows a baptism service at the Amsterdam Mennonite Church.

From the Jan Gleysteen collection

Donate online to Mennonite congregations and organizations
https://giving.mennoniteusa.org/
My Account
Complete My Gift
Home | About Us | FAQs | Giving Contacts | Organizations & Projects
Mennonite Church USA
Donate online to Mennonite congregations and organizations

Specializing in web development and customized software

LIGHTSKY

www.lightsky.com • 888.477.7591 • info@lightsky.com

Want to give back?

The Mennonite is accepting donations for the **Prisoners Fund** and the **Overseas Workers Fund.** If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to either or both, send your donation to *The Mennonite,* 1700 S. Main Street, Goshen, IN 46526. Specify to which fund you are contributing. For more information contact Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498.**

Germantown has 300-year anniversary

Seventy participate in history conference held at the1770 Meetinghouse.

A conference celebrated the 300th anniversary of the formal organization of the Germantown (Pa.) Mennonite Church at the historic 1770 Germantown Mennonite Meetinghouse Oct. 17-18 with 70 participants.

"Germantown: Gateway to North American Mennonite History" was cosponsored by the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust, Mennonite Historical Society, Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania and Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Historical Society. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission provided funding.

Leonard Gross, archivist, introduced the conference with an overview, noting that 1683 marks the birth of a continuing Mennonite presence in North America. (Earlier there had been scattered Mennonites living in New Amsterdam—today New York—whose traces are dim and hard to document). The Mennonites who came in 1683 and years following generally met for worship with the other Germantown residents, whether Quaker or radical Lutheran pietists. But by 1690, Mennonites began to meet separately. It was not until 1708 that the congregation formally organized.

John Ruth, historian, spoke on "William Rittenhouse of Germantown," the first minister of the Germantown Mennonites.

Jan Gleysteen, historian and lecturer, spoke on "Daniel Pastorius: Major Force in Early Germantown." Pastorius was a radical Lutheran pietist.

Keith Sprunger, professor emeritus of history at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., spoke on "Daniel K. Cassel: Mennonite Historian of Germantown." Cassel's *History of the Mennonites* (1888) was the first volume in the English language attempting to cover the whole Anabaptist-Mennonite experience up to that time.

John A. Lapp, former executive secretary of Mennonite Central Committee, spoke on "The Mennonite Presence and American Religious Pluralism: An Agenda for Research."

James Juhnke, professor emeritus of history at Bethel College, spoke on "Germantown and the American Revolution: New Interpretations." He suggested, with documented examples, that not all was as rosy as most American history textbooks suggest and wondered if the Revolution itself would have been necessary to attain the goals of having a representative government and an adequate living standard.

Henry M. Schuler from Reston, Va., spoke on "Europe in the Closing Years of the 17th Century and the Quest for Religious Liberty in Germantown." He underscored the fluidity of those living in early Germantown.—*Leonard Gross*

We came
for the Values,
and the Value.

MENNO HAVEN
Relationships. Values. Options.
MENNO VILLAGE • NORTHFIELD • PENN HALL
800.222.6695 www.mennohaven.org
Menno Haven is committed to providing equal housing for all.

Invitation to comment on AMBS

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is seeking comments about the seminary in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its accrediting agency. AMBS will have a comprehensive evaluation of programs Feb. 16-18, 2009, by a team representing The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. AMBS has been accredited by the Commission since 1974. Its accreditation is at the Master's degree level.

You are invited to submit comments about AMBS to:

Public Comment on Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
The Higher Learning Commission
30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of AMBS or its academic programs. Written, signed comments must be received by January 15, 2009. Comments should include the name, address and telephone number of the person providing the comments.

AMBS
Elkhart, Indiana
www.ambs.edu

Florida church offers healing after rape

Mother and two daughters baptized at Bahia Vista Church after tragedy.

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church in Sarasota, Fla., welcomed a mother and two daughters into their church family on Sept. 7 after one of the daughters faced a tragedy. The younger daughter, Duyen, was brutally raped one evening when attempting to return some books at a library's night depository near Brandon, Fla., where the family lived. After being beaten and strangled in the attack, Duyen suffered multiple strokes and severe brain injury, which left her without the ability to see, speak, eat or walk.

After weeks in a Tampa hospital, the mother searched for a facility that would accept Duyen for rehabilitation, finding one 70 miles from their home. The mother, Vanna, asked a receptionist at this hospital—and a member of Bahia Vista—for a pastor to pray for her daughter. The mother, a Buddhist who grew up in Vietnam, was not completely foreign to Christianity, since her daughters had accepted the Christian faith but were not baptized.

Vanna contacted the church office and began meeting with interim pastor David Kniss. A healing service was held in the cafeteria of the rehabilitation hospital. Other church members joined Kniss in providing music and an anointing service. Duyen's friends attended, along with the medical technicians who responded to the scene of the rape and some hospital personnel.

Kniss continued weekly visits to the hospital, sharing God's Word and prayers. Bahia Vista members prayed for the family. Vanna requested baptism for herself and her two daughters. The Sunday morning of the baptism, Duyen was wheeled to the front of the sanctuary, accompanied by her mother and sister. The women of the church presented each of them with a prayer shawl as a gift.

Duyen is making slow progress in recovery. Doctors determined that her optic nerves are not damaged, and as the brain continues to heal, they expect a return of full sight.—*Esther Kniss*

Bruce Lehman

Members of Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla., welcome new members into their church family.

Tired of licking envelopes?

Take your giving online to **giving.MennoniteUSA.org**

Mennonite Church USA

TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

2009 TOURS

PANAMA CANAL ADVENTURE CRUISE TOUR (January 3-13)
VISIT MEXICO and its COPPER CANYON (February 27-March 8)
EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (April 29-May 15)
ISRAEL and PALESTINE (May 24-June 3)
GREAT TREK TOUR 2009 (May 24-June 4)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE TOUR (June 4-17)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (June 5-18)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 8-20)
MWC #1 / #2 / #3 / #4 / #6 - A Few Seats Available
MWC #5 - PARAGUAY and PERU (July 12-28)
MWC #7 - PARAGUAY and IGUAZU FALLS (July 8-20)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (July 31-August 13)
ENCHANTING DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (October 24-November 1)
BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (November 16-28)

2010 TOURS

AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 5-25)
WITH OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY:
SPRINGTIME in HOLLAND, BELGIUM & GERMANY (May 6-17)
LUTHERAN HOLY LAND TOUR (May 8-19)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 1-14)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA & ITS FJORDS (June 13-28)
PENNSYLVANIA to EUROPE (June 19-July 2)
ISRAEL/PALESTINE (June 24-July 5)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN SHARP (June 29-July 12)
ITALY, AUSTRIA & GERMANY (July 7-17)
ENGLAND and SCOTLAND (July 23-August 4)
SWISS GLACIER EXPRESS (July 29-August 11)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE with PAUL ZEHR (September 5-18)
THE ROAD to JERUSALEM (September 11-22)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE for GERMAN-SPEAKING PERSONS (September 16-29)

TourMagination

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians and faiths around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451 FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR
E-MAIL: office@tourmagination.com WEB: www.tourmagination.com

9 Willow Street
Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada

Reg. #50014322

2308 Wood Street
Lancaster, PA 17603 USA

Franconia recognizes 'shifting contexts'

'Come to the Table: Embracing God in Us' theme for conference assembly

For more than 50 years, the churches of Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Conference have sent missionaries and money to Mexico to plant new churches. This year a church in Mexico City sent missionaries back.

Husband and wife Linker Sanchez and Luz Maria Vargas of the Tierra Prometida congregation were commissioned to work with the Spanish-speaking community in Gaithersburg, Md. The commissioning was on Nov. 7 and part of the opening session for the annual gathering.

"The United States has sent missionaries for many years all over the world," Sanchez said. "But as you know, God is now sending all the nations of the world to the United States—and we have come here to reach our countrymen in their language and culture."

More than 200 people, including 130 delegates from conference congregations and related-ministries, gathered around tables at the Penn View Christian School cafeteria in Souderton, Pa., Nov. 7-8. The theme for the assembly was "Come to the Table: Embracing God in Us."

Unlike previous years, there was no traditional worship time or sermon on Friday evening. Instead, Detwiler invited everyone to sit at tables and "see and hear the movement of Jesus in the faces around us." Throughout the gathering, there was recognition that churches are working to minister in shifting contexts and that the conference itself is becoming more diverse each year. Among conference churches, services are held not only in Spanish and Bahasa Indonesia but also in Vietnamese. Some congregations have growing numbers of people from various other Asian and African contexts. And while Mennonite conferences have historically been organized by geography, the web of relationships is taking the conference outside those boundaries, and conference staff are working with churches in Delaware, New Jersey, Arkansas, Pittsburgh and Washington.

Delegates voted unanimously to approve Randy Heacock, pastor of Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church, assistant conference moderator and conference board vice chair.—*Lora Steiner for Franconia Mennonite Conference*

ENTER

Got photos?

The Mennonite's first photo contest!

$50 will be awarded to the first-place winners in each of **five categories.**

Deadline:
Feb. 1, 2009

See **www.themennonite.org** for more details.

ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE

ENGAGED · EVANGELICAL · ANABAPTIST

Accredited education at half the cost of many Christian colleges

New concentrations: business, education, youth ministries

Spanish language cross-cultural term

Christ-centered community

Credits that transfer

SMALL COLLEGE, BIG IMPACT

www.rosedale.edu ◦ 740-857-1311 ◦ Rosedale, Ohio

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

- Editor@TheMennonite.org
- fax 574-535-6050
- 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

WORKERS

Hershberger, Michele, was ordained by South Central Mennonite Conference at Hesston College and Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan., for teaching and preaching ministry, on Nov. 16.

Yoder, Danny, was licensed for specific ministry as pastor of outreach at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Oct. 19.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Gehman, Stella Milan, Oct. 27, to Rodney and Jodi Miller Gehman, Kalona, Iowa.

Geiser, Nicole Elizabeth, Nov. 8, to Randy and Amy Ickes Geiser, Kidron, Ohio.

Gingerich, Grace Marie, Oct. 24, to Blaine and Jodie Rudolph Gingerich, Kouts, Ind.

Golden, Carson Lee, Nov. 15, to Jason and Andrea Buller Golden, Goshen, Ind.

Krieder, Adrian Leinbach, Nov. 4, to Jonathan and Greta Leinbach Kreider, "The Farm," Tenn.

Krueger, Maaike, Aug. 31, to Jeremy and Marsha Krueger, Waterloo, Ontario.

Loewen, Ruby, Oct. 3, to Will and Ana Loewen, Waterloo, Ontario.

Miller, Audrey Mae, Oct. 26, to Will and Emily Swartzendruber Miller, Kalona, Iowa.

Nafziger, Freya Helaine, Nov. 1, to Adam Nafziger and Nicole Fitch, Minneapolis.

Sawatsky Kingsley, Ania Maret, Nov. 5, to Aaron and Natasha Sawatsky Kingsley, Goshen, Ind.

Schiedel, Caleb, Oct. 1, to Andrew and Karen Martin Schiedel, Waterloo, Ontario.

Schrag, Ethan Kent, to Jerol and Becky Friesen Schrag, Newton, Kan.

Slaubaugh, Beckett Sonny, Nov. 5, to Justin and Shalee Bontrager Slaubaugh, Parnell, Iowa.

Sommerfield, Wyatt Aaron, Nov. 7, to Justin and Carrie Schmidt Sommerfield, Newton, Kan.

MARRIAGES

Alwine/Peters: Matthew Alwine, Johnstown, Pa., and Melanie Peters, Lage, Germany, Sept. 6, at Baptist Church, Lage, Germany.

Boettger/Boring: Jenna Boettger, Hesston, Kan., and David Boring, Phoenix, Ariz., Aug. 18, at Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, Hesston.

Gerlach/Harnish: Ellen Elizabeth Gerlach, Lancaster, Pa., and Alan Ray Harnish, Lancaster, Sept. 6, at Habecker Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Koop/Olsta: Jennifer Koop, Goshen, Ind., and Ryan Olsta, Milwaukee, Wis., Oct. 18, at The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Milwaukee.

Marshall/Nishi: Naomi Marshall, Denver, Colo., and Brian Nishi, Denver, Oct. 25, at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Passwater/Witmer: Kerry Passwater, Leo, Ind., and Loretta Witmer, Leo, Oct. 11, at North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo-Cedarville, Ind.

Seiler/Witmer: Harmony Seiler, Auburn, Ind., and Lester Witmer, Grabill, Ind., Aug. 2, at North Leo Mennonite Church. Leo-Cedarville, Ind.

Wheeler/Wiens: Mya Wheeler, Hesston, Kan., and Josh Wiens, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Aug. 31, at the Wiens family farm in Winnipeg.

DEATHS

Birkey, Vietta Zimmerman, 92, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 26. Spouse: Clarence E. Birkey (deceased). Parents: Jake and Phoebe Redinger Zimmerman. Children: Ronald A., Roger J., Barbara A. Birkey, Carol J. Pratt; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. No funeral service was held at Vietta's request.

Brubacher, Vera Culp, 86, Nappanee, Ind., died Nov. 3. Spouse: Sidney Brubacher (deceased). Parents: Oliver and Lottie Bixler Culp. Step-children: Lavon Brubacher, Randy Brubacher; four step-grandchildren; eight step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 6 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Burky, Lloyd G., 92, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died Nov. 12. Spouse: Glendora Shrock Burky (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Esther Wyss Burky. Children: Bruce, Doug, Lois Hochstetler; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 15 at Smith-Varns Funeral Home, Sugarcreek.

Eby, Sharon Lee Parker, 67, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 1 following a battle with Alzheimer's Disease. Spouse: Roger Eby. Parents: Clayton S. and Virginia June Nutting Parker. Children: Kelley Bumgartner, Kurt, Kent, Kevin; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 4 at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind.

Edelman, Ellen Pauline Hershberger, 93, Wellman, Iowa, died Nov. 7. Spouse: Samuel Edelman. Parents: Chancy and Mary Yoder Hershberger. Child: Clayton; three grandchildren; three step-grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; eight step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 11 at Kalona Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa.

Frey, Marvin, 59, Waterloo, Ontario, died Oct. 19 after a one-year pilgrimage with brain cancer. Spouse: Ardith Bauman Frey. Parents: Martin and Selina Frey. Children: Eric, Christopher; one grandchild. Memorial service: Oct. 25 at Waterloo North Mennonite Church.

Heppner, Caleb, 60, Salem, Ore., died Sept. 20 of cancer. Spouse: Bonnie Heppner. Parents: Allen Glen and Berbie Irene Heppner. Children: Jonathan, Mara Indra, Anna Williams; one grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 24 at St. Paul Episcopal Church, Salem.

Kauffman, Gwen Faith Kauffman, 66, Wolford, N.D., died Oct. 25 of cancer and related problems. Spouse: Paul R. Kauffman. Parents: Reuben and Sadie Miller Kauffman. Children: Deanna, Laura, Sara, Arne, Leon, Joel, Myron, Carl; 19 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 29 at Lakeview Mennonite Church, Wolford.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business.

Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

timely tip:
Check your smoke alarms!

King, Barbara Ann Saltzman, 70, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 10. Spouse: Donald G. King. Parents: Alvin and Mabel Albrecht Saltzman. Children: Cheryl Thomas, Daryl; two grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 15 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Kirchner, Diane Ruth Schmidt, 57, Oscala, Fla., died Nov. 12 of cancer. Spouse: Albert "Al" Ambrose Kirchner. Parents: Alvin Ray and Dorothy Green Schmidt. Children: Michael Friesen, Troy Kirchner, Dean Kirchner; one grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 15 at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Miller, Martha Fern Roth, 81, Wooster, Ohio, died Oct. 20. Spouse: Jack Miller (deceased). Parents: John and Matilda Swartzentruber Roth. Children: Gloria Wilson, Brian, Tim Grigg-Miller, Brenda Miller; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Smithville Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Miller, Mervin Leroy, 81, Scottdale, Pa., died Nov. 6 of Alzheimer's Disease. Spouse: Arelene Eash Miller. Parents: Menno and Edna Mae Witmer Miller. Children: Jim Miller, Dirk, Emily Marshman, Ann Peterson; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 14 at Scottdale Mennonite Church.

Saylor, Merle, 82, Hollsopple, Pa., died Oct. 21. Spouse: Lorene Kaufman Saylor. Parents: Edgar L. Jennie Blough Saylor. Children: Amelia Derr, Craig, Karen Longenecker; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Carpenter Park Mennonite Church, Davidsville, Pa.

Schmidt, Irene Fern, 92, Newton, Kan., died Oct. 13. Parents: Bernhard W. and Helena Schmidt Schmidt. Funeral: Oct. 18 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Marion County, Kan.

Schrag, Esther Mae Schrag, 79, Hesston, Kan., died Aug. 14 after a long struggle with Parkinson's Disease. Spouse: Paul Harvey Schrag. Parents: Daniel D. and Anna Zerger Schrag. Children: Mary Hunsberger, Donna Koehn, Allen, Lois Wahl; 11 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Speicher, Bertha Irene Gingerich, 93, Middlebury, Ind., died Oct. 16. Spouse: Willis Speicher (deceased). Parents: Andrew and Mary Martin Gingerich. Children: Dean, Cheryl Miller; three grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 19 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Swartzendruber, David Harold, 57, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 21 in a car/semi-truck accident. Spouse: Jereen Jesca Nandawula. Spouse: Diane Hange Sinjula. Parents: Harold Leon and Lucille Graber Swartzendruber. Children: Breanne Nicole Buterbaugh, Michael David; one grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 1 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Vanderham, Vivian K. Larson Nofziger, 94, Albany, Ore., died Oct. 17. Spouse: Luverne Rusty Vanderham (deceased). Chris Nofziger (deceased). Parents: Herman and Ruth Larson. Children: Donald Nofziger, Donna Winchester, Linda Heines, Joyce Cleveland; 13 grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 27 at Lebanon Mennonite Church, Lebanon, Ore.

Paraguay 2009

Mennonite World Conference

Assembly Gathered
Asunción, Paraguay
14-19 July 2009

Assembly Scattered
across Latin America
and the Caribbean
before and after
Assembly Gathered

REGISTER NOW!
www.mwc-cmm.org

God is calling us to Paraguay...
¡Vamos!

"Come together in the way of Jesus Christ."
—Philippians 2:1-11

Paraguay & Peru

Join Everett and Barbara Thomas
in Paraguay for
Mennonite World Conference
and then beautiful Peru

ITINERARY*

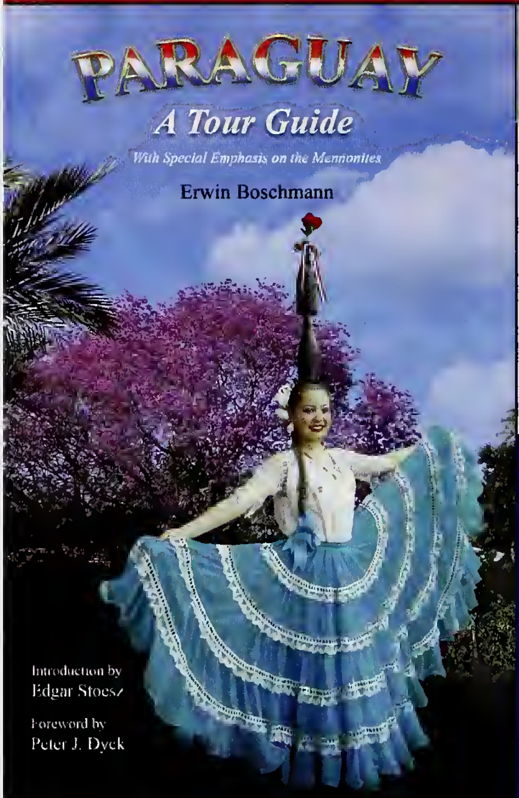
July 12, 2009	Overnight flight to Asunción
July 13	Asunción
July 14-18	MWC Assembly Gathered
July 19	Worship/free time in Asunción
July 20	Hospital Mennonita, Iguassu Falls
July 21	Flight to Lima, Peru
July 22	Lima and Cuzco
July 23	Cuzco and the "Sacred Valley"
July 24	Machu Picchu "Lost City of the Incas"
July 25	Free/Machu Picchu (optional)
July 26-27	Return flight home

Everett Thomas is a veteran of four Mennonite World Conference assemblies and can put your experience with the 2009 Assembly Gathered into the context of the previous 20 years.

*Itinerary is subject to change. For complete details including the tour itinerary, rates and inclusions, please contact:

Tara Nisley, Group Travel Specialist
Menno Travel Service
Phone: 574-975-7766 or 866-606-6198
Email: tara@mennotrav.com
Web site: www.mennotrav.com

Going to the Mennonite World Conference?



PARAGUAY
A Tour Guide
With Special Emphasis on the Mennonites
Erwin Boschmann

Introduction by
Edgar Stoesz
Foreword by
Peter J. Dyck

234 pages, 180+ color photos - 5.5" x 8.5"
USD 25.99

...the indispensable guide book
–Larry Miller, General Sec., MWC

This Guide is a MUST READ!
–Menno Travel, Canada

...makes Paraguay come alive
–Phil Roth, USA

...urgently recommended!
–Gerhard Ratzlaff, Paraguay

...inspiring
–Rita van der Wijk-Kaethler, The Netherlands

Order from either:

Science Enterprises
5248 Woodside Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46228 USA

CMU Bookstore
600 Shaftesbury Blvd
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3POM4

Faith and Life Bookstore
724 N. Main St
Newton, KS 67114 USA

Mennonite Co-op Bookstore
3003 Benham Ave.
Elkhart, IN 46517 USA

Travel without leaving home

Consider hosting or sponsoring an international young adult for a year.

IVEP
International Volunteer Exchange Program

mcc.org/ivep mcc.org/salt

Expand your world and your family

If you are 18 to 27 years old, consider serving overseas for 11 months.

SALT
Serving And Learning Together

Start here...where will you go?

Clinical counselor
Omaha, Neb.
Nurse
Wayland, Iowa
Marketing exec.
Wichita, Kan.
Physician
Tyler, Texas
Teacher
Hydro, Okla.
Teacher
Goshen, Ind.
Hairstylist
Lancaster, Pa.
Nurse
Engadine, Mich.
Nurse
Hesston, Kan.
Teacher
Dodge City, Kan.
Nurse
Princeton, N.J.
Surgeon
Wichita, Kan.
1995-96 Women's
Basketball Team
Regional Champs

Doctor, teacher, stylist, registered nurse, counselor, marketing exec...or pilot, pastor, scientist, artist, network administrator...

Your dreams begin at Hesston.
Start Here, Go Everywhere.

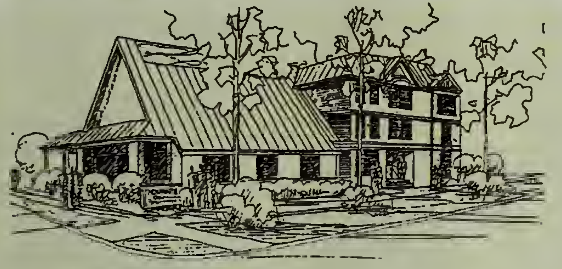
Learn more at www.hesston.edu
800-995-2757, admissions@hesston.edu

Hesston College
START HERE, GO EVERYWHERE

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. is seeking qualified applicants for a ***human resources director*** to facilitate a network of practitioners across the United States. Three years of experience in human resources management, recruitment and interpretation of employment law are required. To request a job description or to send a resumé and letter of interest, contact Becky Stahly at: rss@mcc.org, or MCC Human Resources, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, or call 717-859-1151. Please send letter of interest and resumé by Dec. 15, 2008.

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla., is seeking a ***full-time lead pastor*** that is a team builder and possesses the gift of empowering others. The congregation desires a person who is deeply rooted in biblical teachings and is a committed Anabaptist with some prior pastoral experience. The successful candidate will be visionary and forward thinking and willing to process ideas and listen to others. Bahia Vista is a year-round congregation of 250+ people, but in the winter season that number may quadruple. For any questions or to notify of intent for candidacy, please contact Gene Yoder, Church Administrator and Transition Team Chair, at genebvmenno@comcast.net, or call 941-377-4041 (church), or 941-993-8487 (cell) or write to the church at 4041 Bahia Vista St., Sarasota, FL 34232.

Trissels Mennonite Church (www.trisselsmc.org) in Broadway, Va., is currently accepting applications for a ***full-time lead pastor***. Qualifications include a commitment to the theology and practices of Mennonite Church USA, seminary training and experience in the pastorate. Candidate must have a passionate sense of calling to the ministry. A strong emphasis in youth ministry is desirable. Interested people may submit their resumé to trisselsmc@juno.com by Dec. 31, 2008.



FULL-TIME LEAD PASTOR
Toronto United Mennonite Church

Toronto United Mennonite Church is an Anabaptist-Mennonite community of faith united in a call and desire to follow Jesus in life. We are a vibrant urban congregation of 200 members, located in the Beach neighbourhood of Toronto, North America's most multicultural city.

We seek a lead pastor beginning February 2009, to provide a balanced ministry of worship, preaching and teaching; to provide pastoral care and help the congregation care for each other; and to do required administration. The successful candidate will have minimum M.Div., preferably 10 plus years of pastoral experience, the ability to work with a collegial ministry team and strong lay leadership. S/he will have strong preaching skills, effective communication skills and be comfortable working in a community of considerable diversity while maintaining a strong commitment to the Mennonite Church.

For additional information please visit our website at **www.tumc.ca.** Please direct applications and inquiries to Muriel Bechtel, MCEC Conference Minister, at muriel@mcec.ca, or 519-650-3806 or 1-800-206-9356.

Dr. Tony Campolo will be leading **Men's Retreat at Spruce Lake Retreat**, Jan. 8-9, 2009, Pocono Mountains, northeastern Pennsylvania. To be challenged to deeper, active discipleship, call 800-822-7505. Package: $99/person, www.sprucelake.org.

Director of Denominational Ministry for **Mennonite Church USA**: Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership is inviting candidates or suggested candidates for the director of Denominational Ministry for Mennonite Church USA. The director will give overall leadership to denominational support for area conference ministers and provide missional church inspiration for all parts of the church. The director will lead the current team of denominational ministers while giving leadership to a process of discernment with area conferences and churchwide agencies for how Executive Leadership and churchwide agencies can better equip conference ministers in the future. For additional information see the employment opportunities listed in the "About us" section at www.MennoniteUSA.org. Application review will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. Executive Leadership is an equal opportunity employer and encourages women and Racial/Ethnic people to apply. Mail your application to: Executive Leadership, Attn: Human Resources, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; Toll-free: 866-866-2872; email: HR@MennoniteUSA.org.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is accepting applications for the position of ***MCC Great Lakes Executive Director*** located in Goshen, Ind. The director is responsible for all programs, staff and activities in the Great Lakes area and is responsible to the MCC Great Lakes board. Familiarity with MCC constituency, strong relational administrative skills and cultural competency required. Experience with budgeting and administration also required. Significant travel time within the region. To request a job description or to send a resumé and letter of interest contact Becky Stahly at: rss@mcc.org, or MCC Human Resources, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, or call 717-859-1151. Application review begins Dec. 10, 2008.

Goshen College announces six ***full-time, tenure-track faculty positions*** in the departments of ***art, biology, education, English, physics and psychology*** beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year. Application reviews will begin Dec. 1, 2008, and continue until the positions are filled. Please visit our Web site at www.goshen.edu/employment for more information about each position's responsibilities and requirements as well as to submit an application. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is a liberal arts institution affiliated with Mennonite Church USA.

Kentucky Holy Land Pilgrimage: Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary will coordinate a tour to religious communities in northern Kentucky, May 24-31, 2009, led by Marlene Kropf. Communities include Saint Meinrad Archabbey, Gethsamani Abbey and Shaker Village Pleasant Hill. The tour includes daily experiences of prayer and retreat, and presentations on each spiritual tradition. Transportation and lodging is $1,129; tuition for one or two credit hours is additional. See more at www.ambs.edu/kentucky. Contact Rosemary Reschly, 574-296-6244 or rreschly@ambs.edu, for an application. Registration deadline is Feb. 10, 2009.

Breaking down the walls of us and them

Regina Shands Stoltzfus

The waning hours of Nov. 4 found me at my computer, multitasking, trying not to be too nervous about the election results. A little after 11 the election was called. The United States had just elected a black man, Barack Obama, as president.

Sometime after midnight I went into each of my children's bedrooms, shaking them awake to tell them the news. I wanted to be the first one they heard it from. For me it will always be an "I remember where I was when" moment. An earlier one comes from my childhood, when Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. I remember where I was when I heard the news, and I remember thinking, Why do they hate us so much? I don't know that I ever asked that question aloud, but I often pondered it. I trace the beginning of my double consciousness from those moments. As W.E.B. du Bois described it, the notion of being doubly conscious has to do with being part of and not part of, in the language of his day, "an American, a Negro, two warring ideals in one dark body." American yet "other."

For many of us who know this double consciousness, especially those of my parents' generation and before, this presidential election represented something many thought they would never see. As a black Christian woman who is a member of a predominantly white denomination, I find my consciousness tripled, even quadrupled. I observe and participate in events such as a presidential campaign cycle through multiple lenses.

One of the lessons of this campaign for me has been how serious the historical amnesia, at best—or ignorance, at worst—is in our society. One example is the vilification heaped upon black Christians and clergy who ascribe to a theology of black liberation. People viewed suspiciously a church motto of "Unashamedly Black and Unapologetically Christian," and pundits decried it as contradictory to the tenets of Christianity. I understand that part of political rhetoric involves calling into question various aspects of a candidate's life and choices, but I expected more visible acts of solidarity from sisters and brothers in church communities around the country. I expected more understanding of how such a theology and tradition of church practice had been shaped by centuries of racial oppression, in part carried out by the systematic disruption and destruction of family and cultural, including religious, systems. The black church, born out of pain and struggle, has historically been the institution to shelter and nourish black spirituality and provide a home for the campaign for civil rights and justice. The Mennonite church (like other denominations) wrestled with joining the fight for civil rights in the 1960s. Then, as now, there were pastors and leaders and people in Mennonite pews who without hesitation joined that movement because it fit their understanding of the prophets and of Jesus and his teachings. My own faith was nurtured in such a congregation. It taught me about the love of God through word and actions. And while it taught about the dignity and worth of all people and preached our oneness in Christ Jesus, it also celebrated blackness and African-American heritage.

Mainstream media and casual observers of the news may not have paid much attention to the blatant acts of racism during and after the campaign. The dominant culture did not seem to take it seriously when people called for Obama's death at rallies. Yet in the days following the election, those who track such things have noted a marked uptick in acts of racist intimidation and violence across the country. There is much work to do.

Several weeks before the election I heard a person at a church relate a difficult moment during a family gathering in which there was friction over political differences. The person asked for prayer that the family would maintain civility and keep their relationships during the rest of the campaign and once the election was over. And so we prayed.

My prayers continue. For this president, for our nation, for the world. Even though "change" was the mantra of this campaign, I know that one man cannot bring about the kind of changes many believe this world needs. I also know that many people fear the kind of change this new president represents. And many celebrate the very change he represents. Both ends of that spectrum and many places in between are occupied by my sisters and brothers in the church. I pray that we can continue to be church together and do the work God has called us to do in the world. I want to build a church where together we continue to break down the dividing wall between us and them, whatever the us-ness and them-ness represents: race, gender, sexuality, class and more.

In the early hours of Nov. 5, I stared at the small screen on my computer. I watched and listened to what I believed would never happen. I saw the thousands upon thousands of people gathered in Chicago, listening to the same speech. With them, and with millions of people around the world, I cried tears of joy. TM

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

Christ of the Celts: The Healing of Creation by J. Philip Newell (Jossey-Bass, 2008, $19.95) brings together a vision of who Christ is today with the Celtic reverence for harmony with God and nature.

Gandhi and Jesus: The Saving Power of Nonviolence by Terrence J. Rynne (Orbis Books, 2008, $20) explores the work of four Christian pacifists who reveal the centrality of nonviolence in the life and death of Jesus: C.F. Andrews, Gandhi's confidant and closest Christian friend; John Howard Yoder, a Mennonite theologian; Bernard Haring, a Catholic moral theologian; and Walter Wink, who has written on the "third way" of Jesus.

A Season of Hope: Food Security in Southern Chad (Mennonite Central Committee, 22 minutes, $15.99) is a DVD that shows how MCC works with other organizations in Chad to insure every person a nutritious, culturally appropriate diet and creative ways to share limited resources with their neighbors.

Finding Anna Bee by Cindy Snider (Herald Press, 2008, $9.99) tells the story of Anna Bee and her five friends as they discover a mysterious bridge to the past. It's for 9- to 14-year-olds.

One Quilt Many Pieces: A Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada by Margaret Loewen Reimer (Herald Press, 2008, $13.99) is an updated introduction to more than 20 Mennonite groups in Canada, with membership facts on Old Order communities, mainstream denominations, German-speaking family groups and churches of many ethnicities and languages.

States of Exile: Visions of Diaspora, Witness and Return by Alain Epp Weaver (Herald Press, 2008, $18.99) offers a political theology of exile that envisions diaspora and return as integral dimensions of the church's witness for the shalom of the city. He envisions the Christian church as a community in exile that must learn to be theologically "not in charge."

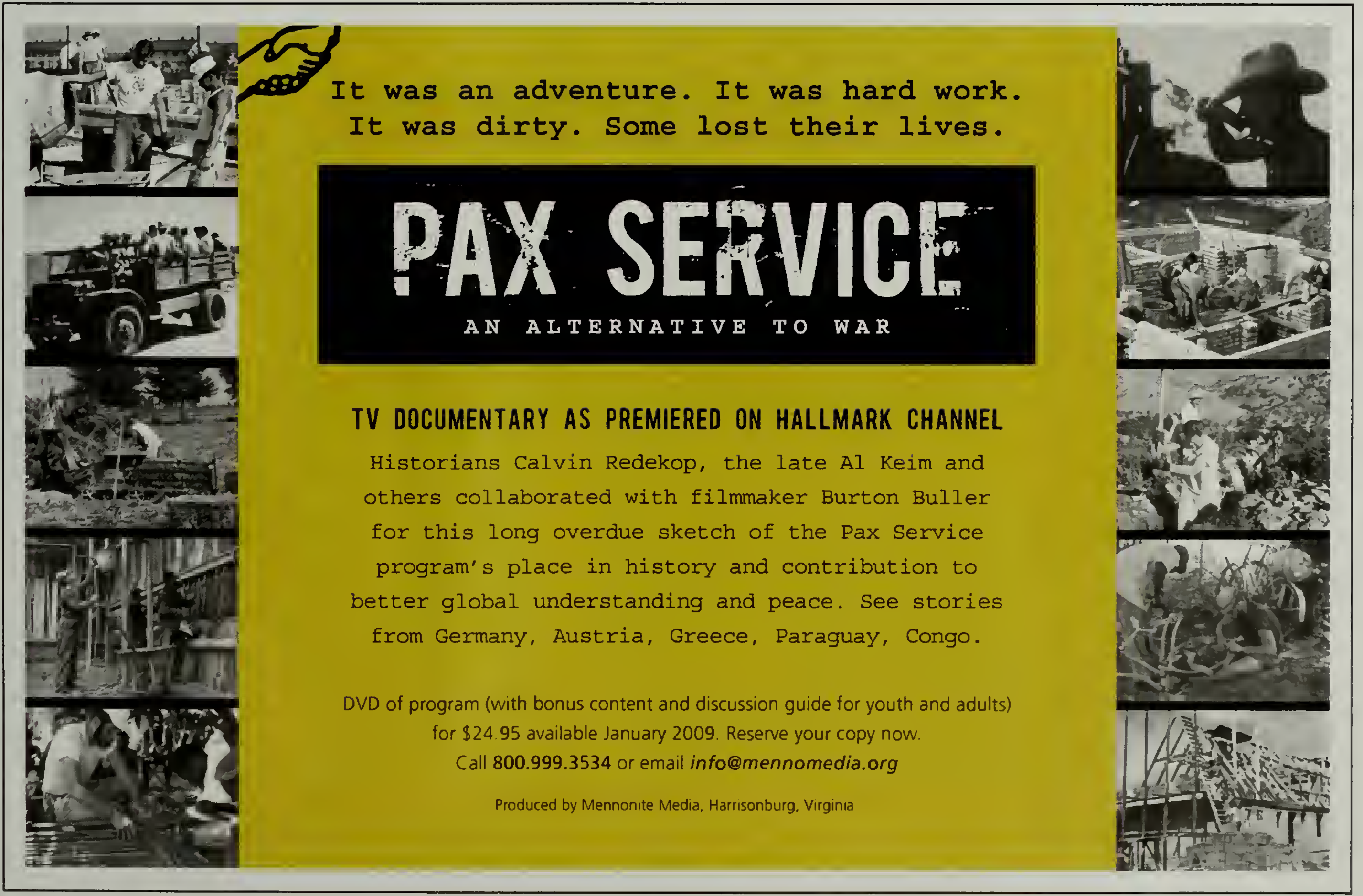
The Living God and Our Living Psyche: What Christians Can Learn from Carl Jung by Ann Belford Ulanov and Alvin Dueck (Eerdmans, 2008, $15) acknowledges Christian suspicion of June but maintains that his psychology can enrich the life of faith.

Conversations with American Writers: The Doubt, the Faith, the In-Between by Dale Brown (Eerdmans, 2008, $18) includes interviews with Eleanor Taylor Bland, David James Duncan, Terence Faherty, Ernest Gaines, Philip Gulley, Ron Hansen, Silas House, Jan Karon, Sheri Reynolds and Lee Smith.

The Kings and Their Gods: The Pathology of Power by Daniel Berrigan (Eerdmans, 2008, $20) examines the complex terrain of 1 and 2 Kings, opening our eyes to the flaws of their oft-praised characters. He shows that this dark time in biblical history is in many ways repeating itself today.

Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement by Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J. Walsh (Eerdmans, 2008, $24) discusses various forms of homelessness—socioeconomic, ecological and psychospiritual—and creatively shows how biblical attentiveness and Christian faith can heal the profound dislocations in our society.

Looking Before and After: Testimony and the Christian Life by Alan Jacobs (Eerdmans, 2008, $14) encourages us to ask how individual lives can, in a Christian sense, be meaningful, how we can interpret those meanings and how we might tell our own stories in ways that avoid the dangers of presumption and despair.



It was an adventure. It was hard work. It was dirty. Some lost their lives.

PAX SERVICE
AN ALTERNATIVE TO WAR

TV DOCUMENTARY AS PREMIERED ON HALLMARK CHANNEL

Historians Calvin Redekop, the late Al Keim and others collaborated with filmmaker Burton Buller for this long overdue sketch of the Pax Service program's place in history and contribution to better global understanding and peace. See stories from Germany, Austria, Greece, Paraguay, Congo.

DVD of program (with bonus content and discussion guide for youth and adults) for $24.95 available January 2009. Reserve your copy now. Call 800.999.3534 or email *info@mennomedia.org*

Produced by Mennonite Media, Harrisonburg, Virginia

********************************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 895 15-DEC-09 66994 P-1 P79
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Anna Groff

Who's having a quarterlife crisis?

Participants at the Young Adult Fellowship retreat last month named the "quarterlife crisis" one of their top concerns as Mennonite young adults.

According the book *Quarterlife Crisis* (Penguin Putnam, 2001), this crisis "covers the interval that encompasses the transition from the academic world to the 'real' world—an age group that can range from late adolescence to the mid-thirties but is usually most intense in twenty-somethings."

The authors, Abby Wilner and Alexandra Robbins, contrast it to the midlife crisis: "The quarterlife crisis occurs precisely because there is none of that predictable stability that drives middle-aged people to do unpredictable things."

At the retreat, artists, teachers, chemical engineers, church workers and others attended a discussion session focusing on this issue. I learned that no career path completely avoids fear of failure, boredom and dissatisfaction, and these feelings may cause anxiety and depression, according to the book.

However, young adults find hope from various sources. One example from the book: Religion and faith are places of refuge for some twenty-somethings during this time of transition and uncertainty. One's faith can also serve as an identity piece when making life, career and relationship decisions.

The quarterlife crisis occurs precisely because there is none of that predictable stability that drives middle-aged people to do unpredictable things.—Wilner and Robbins

In church settings, older adults can step in and support younger adults. Older adults might have a difficult time remembering what their quarterlife crisis—if any—was like. But here are the facts: the average American changes jobs eight times before the age of 32, the average college graduate has $20,000 in loan debt, and 27 is the average age to get married.

These dynamics contribute to current crises for young adults. Attitudes toward the institutional church, relationships with friends and family, and personal faith are also factors.

One young adult—an Oberlin (Ohio) College graduate—interviewed in the book says, "Notions of 'self' were thrown around all of the time during my time at college. Going to a liberal arts school, we all practically majored in being incredibly self-aware."

Mennonites often use "call" language rather than "self" language. Some Mennonite young adults at the retreat applauded their Mennonite colleges for encouraging them to find and follow their call—whether it be working in the church or in secular jobs.

But at times we face more difficulties and loneliness entering the workforce than expected, especially if one's "call" does not provide adequate compensation. Some said they felt encouraged as college students to "go and do good things" with a sense of humility. But when it was time to "go and do" those things, these young Mennonites lacked the support they needed.

While cultivating this "culture of call," we should take into account the realities young adults face in their 20s, especially while job hunting. The current economy and job market exacerbate this crisis. But there are ways to provide some support:

Congregations can form small groups or Sunday school classes to address the quarterlife crisis.

Intergenerational groups or classes can be a place for various ages to share experiences and offer advice.

Churches can support young people in their job hunting, offer advice for career and graduate school decisions and help find places to live.

I hear older adults joke about the transient, indecisive nature of young adults—and I'm sure it's frustrating for older adults to see these young people come and go from their congregations seemingly without a care. But it's in the best interest of Mennonite Church USA to understand the "quarterlife crisis" and consider whether young adults attending (or not attending) their congregations are experiencing it.—*ag*

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

ONLINE

TheMennonite

www.TheMennonite.org

December 16, 2008

12 Behind our carols

16 Christmas moments

18 Coordinated communication

32 A church in recession

Christmas reflections

Page 8

Pregnant with God

Isaac Villegas is pastor of Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship.

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Nora was born of Jen and Nick. Serena was born of Kathy and David. Benjamin was born of Celia and Jon. All these new babies came to us within the past few months. And our church has two more on the way: Rebecca is due this week and Martha a few weeks after her. These pregnant women display the profound depths of hospitality. Martha and Rebecca have made room for new lives to form in their bodies. They have become spaces where another can grow.

Pregnancy and birth are also the rhythms of the Christian life. We are like expectant mothers, surrendering our lives so that we may bear God's new life in the world. We offer ourselves as spaces where God can birth good news. We bear Christ's presence through our hospitality to God, surrendering our bodies to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Advent is our chance to remember the first time someone made room for Jesus. The angel Gabriel brought a word from God to Mary: "You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus," he announced to Mary. "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Luke 1:31, 35). How did Mary receive this strange and wonderful news? She replied, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord. Let it be with me according to your word" (v. 38).

Mary shows us how to extend hospitality to God, which is simply what it means to be a disciple. She made room for God's life within her own. She opened her life, her very body, to bring Jesus into the world. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Son received life in Mary's womb. In her womb, Mary bore the One who is good news in a world full of bad news. The light of the world came from her womb. She shared her flesh with God. Mary's faith made room for God to move in her life, and through her life into the world.

In a chapter of his book *The Contagion of Jesus*, Sebastian Moore offers Mary as an example of discipleship. Too often we give the impression that discipleship is a masculine endeavor because the Gospels follow the bumbling path of Jesus' 12 male companions. Although Mary is a marginal character, her faithfulness encompasses the life of Jesus. She is the first to give her life for Christ's sake. And she follows Jesus to the foot of the cross.

The silent presence of Mary whispers the secret of discipleship. She does not seek to be the greatest in the kingdom, as some of the other disciples do. Mary sits with the humble. She does not seize opportunities to change the world with effective displays of discipleship. Instead, Mary reveals the passive power of surrender to God—"I am the servant of the Lord. Be it done to me according to your word." The Most High comes to rest in the weak.

God desires people who offer their lives as spaces where good news is born. Mary's hospitality to God, Moore writes, shows the kind of surrender that leads to "the forming of Christ in us as in her womb." When we surrender ourselves to God, the Holy Spirit overshadows our body and begins to form Christ's presence. Christians are weak people who make room for God. Discipleship is our unceasing struggle to welcome God into our midst, as Mary does, so that something unspeakably new and wonderful may be born in our world.

With Mary, we pray: "We are the servants of the Lord. Be it done to us according to your word." TM

TheMennonite

Vol. 11, No. 24, December 16, 2008

Editor: **Everett J. Thomas**
EverettT@themennonite.org
Associate editor: **Gordon Houser**
GordonH@TheMennonite.org
Assistant Editor: **Anna Groff**
AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
Advertising, subscriptions: **Rebecca Helmuth**
Rebecca@TheMennonite.org
Bookkeeper: **Celina Romero**
CelinaR@TheMennonite.org
Editorial Assistant: **Nora Miller**
Design: **Dee Birkey**

Web site: www.TheMennonite.org

Offices:
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526-4794
phone: 800-790-2498
fax: 574-535-6050

722 Main St., P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
phone: 866-866-2872
fax: 316-283-0454

801 N. Negley Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412-894-8705
fax: 412-363-1216

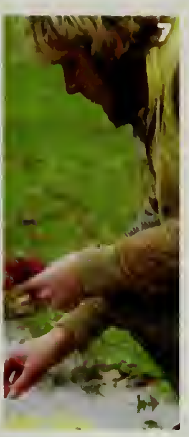
The Mennonite is the official publication of Mennonite Church USA. Our mission is to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1S22-7766) is normally published on the first and third Tuesdays of each month by the board for The Mennonite, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Goshen, IN 46526. Subscription rates for one year: $43.9S to U.S. addresses and or $51.45 USD to Canadian addresses. Group rates available. Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite*, or the board for The Mennonite, Inc.

Postmaster
Send form 3579 to:
The Mennonite
1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

Mennonite
Church
USA

CONTENTS

20
FROM SPACE



8 Guiding angels and Rachel's tears
Reflections on Matthew 2:12-23 and Christmas from the days immediately following—*David A. Stevens*

12 Behind our carols
Where did our Christmas carols come from?—*Karen Sutherland*

15 Christmas and tomatoes
Sometimes the simplest things are the most memorable. —*Katie Martin*

16 Christmas moments
We can learn from those who witnessed Jesus' birth.—*Matthew Yoder*

19 MC USA leaders visit two Congo groups
Congolese leader: 'The best process is one that ... provides sufficient resistance.'

20 Top 10 stories for Mennonite Church USA in 2008
2008 meant changes for Mennonite Church USA: one-board model proposed and then deferred, executive directors leave, health-care access plan accepted—*Anna Groff*

22 MCC braces for coming economic storm

DEPARTMENTS

2 Grace and truth
Pregnant with God—*Isaac Villegas*

4 Readers say

6 News digest

18 Leadership
Coordinated communication—*Marty Lehman*

28 For the record

30 Mediaculture
Profits vs. truthtelling—*Gordon Houser*

32 Editorial
A church in recession—*Everett J. Thomas*

Cover: "Flight to Egypt" by Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn. Amsterdam, 1627 | www.WikimediaCommons.org

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

We can be self-critical without disdain

I was much interested in the several paragraphs in the Nov. 4 editorial "What Good News?" on Mennonite "self-loathing." I have occasionally seen references to Jewish "self-hatred." I don't recall seeing "self-loathing" identified as a Mennonite malady before. In this editorial, Everett Thomas is on to an important topic.

I have wondered whether the disdain that some "progressive" Mennonites have for conspicuously conservative sisters and brothers represents a kind of self-loathing. I have also wondered whether the dropping of the Mennonite label by some congregations represents a similar "lack of self-confidence." The label change sometimes represents a strong desire to be missional—without recognizing that all labels, including "Christian" or "nondenominational," also have difficult baggage. Former Mennonites sometimes express such disappointment with their past history, which appears to be a form of shame.

Thanks for calling attention to this weakness in our self-perception. If there is to be a continuing Mennonite identity in the 21st century, we need to find meaning in our tradition, its uniqueness and significance clearly articulated and affirmed. We can be self-critical without being disdainful. *The Mennonite* ought to work on defining a meaningful identity that is more than self-promotion and self-congratulation.—*John A. Lapp, Akron, Pa.*

Are other Christians Mennonite?

I just finished reading James Schrag's column, "Add Words to Deeds" (Nov. 4), and I appreciated what he said. But it also raised a question for me that I have been thinking on for a long time. Are Mennonites Christians, or are Christians Mennonites?

That is, do Mennonites have the firmest grasp on the Christian faith, or do we just operate within a system that we judge how "Christian" someone is by using Mennonites as a measuring tool? To use Schrag's example of the farmer who came to help: If the farmer was of another faith and did his good deed because his faith system prompted him, would we say he was being Christian or he was being Mennonite?

Growing up entrenched in the faith that used to be called Old Mennonite, I assumed that all Christians practiced their faith—in word and deed—the way we did. Later, I learned there are all types of Christians who live out their faith in more ways and varieties than I had imagined. Now, as I look back on my early years and see and read how Mennonites are presenting themselves to the world at large, I can see even more clearly how the perspective of my early years was formed. This is not a criticism or critique of how Mennonites are but a realization that looking out from "inside" the Mennonite faith is like wearing glasses that are ground to a Mennonite "prescription." Maybe we need to do that in order to retain what is unique to our faith. But the danger is that we view and discern what we see using the Mennonite prescription instead of one that is unfettered by the past, our present and where we see ourselves going in the future.—*Carole Boshart, Eugene, Ore.*

A seat at the table

As a young adult, I appreciate Justin James King's "modest proposal" for intergenerational table talk ("A Seat at the Table," Nov. 18). However, the issue is not whether we young adults have been invited to the table but whether or not we value or understand the table to which we have already been invited. Often the structures and processes in which we have been invited to participate do not leave us feeling empowered or heard, and I dare say it is not unique to the young adult situation. I venture to guess our racial-ethnic brothers and sisters have the same frustration, with good reason. However, I do not think the responsibility is or should entirely be left to the denomination to resolve.

We young adults should move beyond our frustrations and engage the structures we have. We are here to serve with the church (warts and all), not to be served by the church. If we want change, then we have to endure the suffering of laborious conference meetings and budget discussions long enough to make ourselves known and heard.
—*Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg, Bryan, Ohio*

Involve young adults this month

"A Seat at the Table" (Nov. 18) by Justin James King deserves immediate attention by all congre-

IN THIS ISSUE

Our cover illustration, Rembrandt's "Flight to Egypt," was radical in his day for using beggar figures to depict the Holy Family (www.a-r-t.com/rembrandt/remessay.htm). And our cover story (page 8) shows that the first Christmas was not the sentimental one we often celebrate. Karen Sutherland (page 12) offers stories behind some of our carols. Katie Martin (page 15) shows how Christmas and tomatoes may go together. Matthew Yoder (page 16) presents lessons from those who witnessed Jesus' birth. We've reflected on the top news stories in the past year (page 20). And we offer thanks to the many generous readers who donated to *The Mennonite* in 2008 (page 24). May your Christmas be joyful.—*Associate editor* gations. He rightly calls for youth and young adults to have an active role and "seat at the table" in our congregations and life of the denomination. Why not? I find it unthinkable that a 22-year-old seminary student needs to bring this issue to our attention.

Young people being involved in church councils, committees, worship services and various governance posts should be a given. King says he is "merely calling us to begin a conversation to find a way to give young adults a reason to remain active in the church." Rather than a time-consuming "conversation," let's have the pastors and church councils take action at their next meeting to correct this serious oversight. The vibrancy of youth and young adult perspectives and gifts will enrich your congregation. As the apostle Paul wrote a long time ago, "Let no one despise your youth."—*Lee M. Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Mennonite church is not Evangelical

The use of "Evangelical" in the title of Matt Friesen's excellent article ("An Evangelical Peace and Justice Church," Nov. 18) raised an immediate horror in my mind at the idea of Mennonite Church USA being described as Evangelical. My horror dissipated upon reading the article, though I continued to be concerned about the use of the term Evangelical. The author is actually writing about evangelism. Both words come from the Greek word translated into English as "gospel" or "good news."

Much confusion has developed in the media as well as in popular discourse about what the word evangelical means. It is both a noun and an adjective. As an adjective it describes a set of doctrines or beliefs as well as organizations that adhere to those beliefs. As a noun it names a person (like my former self) or people (e.g. The National Association of Evangelicals) who adhere to those beliefs. Evangelism (noun) refers to the proclamation of that good news and entails the making of followers of Jesus. What separates Anabaptists and Mennonites from Evangelicals is the understanding of what is the gospel and how a disciple lives. A better title could have been "An Evangelistic Peace and Justice Church."

Please do not ascribe to Mennonite Church USA either the noun or the adjective "evangelical." Due to differences between the National Association of Evangelicals' doctrinal statement and our Mennonite confession of faith, I cannot think of the Mennonite Church USA as being Evangelical.—*Robert V. Clausen, Greenville, Ill.*

What kind of denomination?

I am pleased to receive *The Mennonite* in my mailbox more so than any other news magazine that comes to my door. The Mennonite church attracted me because it seems to be both evangelical and with a heavy leaning toward Jesus' message of peace and justice. However, hardly an issue goes by when I wonder to what sort of organization I belong. Whether I read that Mennonite Voluntary Service workers are part of a Universalist Unitarian Church ("MVS Heroes Fight Male-Pattern Violence," Aug. 19) or that the Young Adult Fellowship discusses including new religions into the denomination ("Young Adults Set Own Agenda at Retreat," Nov. 18), I feel myself losing interest in the hope our denomination initially gave me.

Are we a religion with theological practices, a history of white-knuckle Christian living and a hope in our King Jesus? Or have we caved into the pressures of being so justice-oriented that we must lose our religion and lose Jesus, to speak the message of peace? We must remain a Christ-focused people.

To see the sorts of remarks that seem to say otherwise in recent issues of *The Mennonite* without much explanation, I begin to wonder "What kind of denomination or, I daresay, religion, do I really belong to?"—*Tim Baer, Baltimore*

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Because of the economic recession, I plan to: (54 votes)

○ Spend less this Christmas (56%)

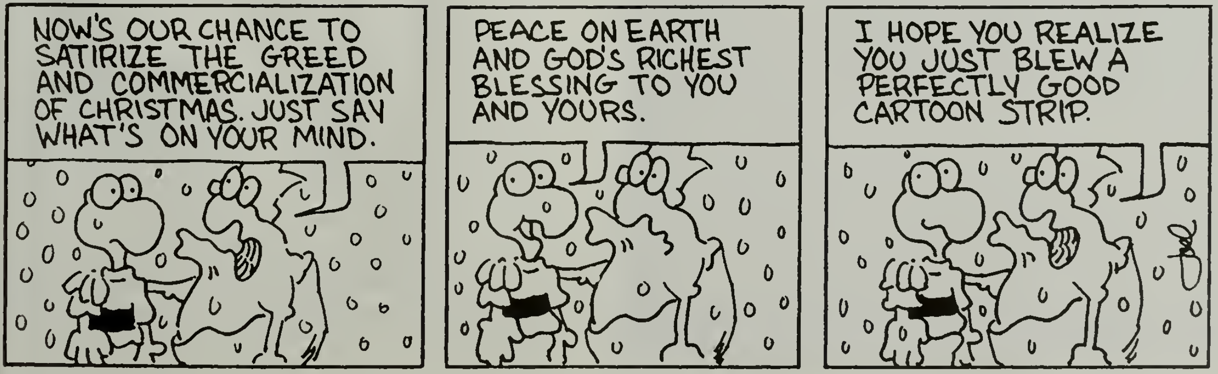
○ Spend the same as last year (30%)

○ Spend more than last year (13%)

○ Not sure (2%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org

Pontius' Puddle **Joel Kauffmann**


NOW'S OUR CHANCE TO SATIRIZE THE GREED AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF CHRISTMAS. JUST SAY WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND.
PEACE ON EARTH AND GOD'S RICHEST BLESSING TO YOU AND YOURS.
I HOPE YOU REALIZE YOU JUST BLEW A PERFECTLY GOOD CARTOON STRIP.

IN BRIEF

Priest faces excommunication

Maryknoll Father Roy Bourgeois, a longtime pacifist who is known widely for his opposition to U.S. military policy, faces near-certain excommunication from the Catholic church for his outspoken advocacy of women's ordination. Bourgeois was notified Oct. 21 by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that he had 30 days in which to recant his position or be excommunicated. Two weeks after receiving the notice, he responded, saying he could not recant what he considered a matter of justice and conscience. In mid-November, he was still awaiting final word from the Vatican. Bourgeois is known primarily as the founder of SOA Watch, a group that began staging annual protests at the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Ga., in 1990.—*National Catholic Reporter*

How to deal with terrorists

- Percentage of 648 terrorist groups that ended between 1968 and 2006 because they entered the political process: 43
- Percentage of 648 terrorist groups that ended through police work and intelligence gathering: 40
- Percentage of 648 terrorist groups that ended due to military force: 7—*Yes! magazine*

Online registration soars for Columbus 2009

NEWTON, Kan.—More than 2,600 people registered for Mennonite Church USA's 2009 convention within 24 hours of the opening of online registration for next July's event. It took a month for numbers to soar this high for San José 2007.

Online registration opened at 8 a.m. EST on Dec. 1 at www.MennoniteUSA.org/convention. Paper registration will open Jan. 2, 2009. Online registration became an option for convention goers in 1999 and is now the most widely used method of registering for Mennonite Church USA conventions.

By 8:05 a.m. EST Dec. 1, 100 people had completed registration forms online. By 9 a.m. the same day, that number rose to 1,292, and the first hotel was sold out. Jorge Vallejos, director of convention planning for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, is hesitant to say whether these early registrations are a useful benchmark for determining overall registration numbers.

"There's still a long way to go, and there are still a lot of people who haven't decided whether they're coming to Columbus," Vallejos said. "It's just encouraging to see so many people who make registering early a priority."—*Mennonite Church USA*

Vietnam Mennonite Church legalized

HO CHI MINH CITY—Upon the Vietnam Mennonite Church's fulfillment of all requirements for full legal status, the Vietnam National Religious Affairs Committee approved the church's request to organize its first official general assembly (the second general assembly according to the church's historical records). The assembly was held Nov. 15-17 at a guest house and conference complex in Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City.

With full legal status, the church can now hold corporate title to real estate, establish a Bible institute for training pastors and leaders, forge relationships with other denominations to sponsor joint projects, serve as an official partner with Mennonite Central Committee in relief and community development work, extend and accept invitations for international conferences and more. —*Mennonite World Conference*

Samantha Seifried

New academic center opens at Lancaster school

Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite School students and teachers moved into the Lancaster campus' newly completed Rutt Academic Center on Dec. 2. Helping cut the ribbon, left to right, are board member Harold Mast, student Jewan Dawkins, Lancaster campus principal Miles Yoder, student Lauren Fueyo and Lancaster Mennonite Conference moderator Keith Weaver.—*LMS*

CPT begins three-month project in Congo

CHICAGO—Christian Peacemaker Teams is beginning a three-month project based in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo city of Goma. A team of four CPTers was scheduled to arrive in early December. Groupe Martin Luther King, a Goma human rights organization, has invited CPT to join them in their work. The initial CPT field team will consist of Cliff Kindy (North Manchester, Ind.), Wendy Lehman (Chicago), Rosemarie Milazzo (Maryknoll, N.Y.) and Jane MacKay Wright (Providence Bay, Ont.).—*CPT*

MCC launches Seed program for young adults

AKRON, Pa.—In January 2009, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) will launch the Seed program, a two-year program for young adults aged 20-30. The program, composed of international teams, will focus on the components of service, reflection and advocacy. It will begin in Colombia, then expand to other locations.

The program development and vision have been a collaborative process with IMCOL, the Mennonite Church of Colombia, the Mennonite Brethren Church and the Brethren in Christ Church in Colombia. MCC is exploring expanding the Seed program to the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as locations in the Middle East, Asia and the Caribbean. Any questions may be directed to Daniel Leonard at drl@mcc.org.—*MCC*

ADNet taps associates for special ministries

GOSHEN, Ind.—Anabaptist Disabilities Network associate Christine Guth was licensed by Central District Conference on Oct. 12 for specialized ministries with people with disabilities through ADNet. Guth serves on staff as program associate for ADNet, a Goshen-based national advocacy ministry on behalf of people with disabilities and mental illness.

Lowell Brown

urelville draws artists to spirituality and art retreat
ilip Hosler, Goshen (Ind.) College student, creates a natural art stallation as part of Laurelville Mennonite Church Center's eyond Words: Imagining a Visual Spirituality" a new retreat on irituality and the visual arts held Oct. 24-26 at Mt. Pleasant, Pa. *Laurelville Mennonite Church Center*

Christy Weems, a student at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., has been named a student associate by ADNet for the 2008-09 academic year.

Weems is a junior elementary education major at Bethel and a native of Topeka, Kan. She is carrying out a project in cooperation with the Conference Resource Library in North Newton to include among the library's resources materials to aid in teaching Sunday school students with developmental disabilities. The library serves the Western District and South Central conferences of Mennonite Church USA. Weems' project will also contribute to ADNet's work in providing resources for families and churches throughout the country as they work to include people with all types of disabilities in congregational and community life. *—ADNet*

Dock Woods, Souderton homes affiliate

LANSDALE, Pa.—The board of directors for the new parent company of Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Homes and Dock Woods Community, Lansdale, announced the affiliation of the two communities. The new parent company will be called Living Branches. Together the communities that comprise Living Branches serve more than 1,350 residents and employ 600 team members on campuses in Souderton, Lansdale and Hatfield, Pa. *—Dock Woods Community*

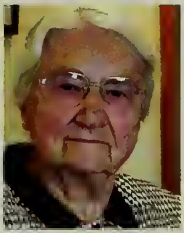
Mennonite Women USA plan retreat

NEWTON, Kan.—Mennonite Women USA is engaging in a process to discern the best way to meet the needs of Mennonite women in the United States in the future through a strategic planning retreat designed to elicit new ways for MW USA to help women connect, share and serve together in a postmodern world.

Becky Drumm of Mennonite Foundation will facilitate the strategic planning process that MW USA will convene at Amigo Centre in Sturgis, Mich., March 27-28, 2009. MW USA is seeking women of color to represent 25 to 30 percent of participants, and women age 30 and younger to represent 10 to 15 percent of participants. *—Mennonite Church USA*

Founder of radio ministry dies at age 93

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Ruth Wenger Brunk Stoltzfus of Harrisonburg, Va., a pioneer in Mennonite media projects and many other arenas, died Dec. 2, at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg, at the age of 93. Stoltzfus started the long-running Heart to Heart radio program in 1950 as a family enterprise independent of an agency or church. She was director and speaker on the broadcast for eight years and shepherded it into partnership with Mennonite Broadcasts Inc., and Mennonite Board of Missions, predecessor agencies of Mennonite Media and Mennonite Mission Network. She turned the program over to Ella May Miller in June 1958. Miller died on Oct. 26, also at the age of 93. Stoltzfus was the first known Mennonite woman on the airwaves with a regular program.*—Mennonite Mission Network*


Ruth Wenger Brunk Stoltzfus

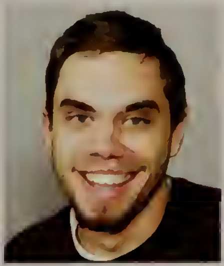
Hershberger ordained for Christian ministry

HESSTON, Kan.—Michele Hershberger was ordained by South Central Mennonite Conference for Christian ministry in Mennonite Church USA on Nov. 16. Hershberger, who is chair of the Bible and Ministry Division at Hesston College, joined the faculty in 2000. She has been a frequent speaker and playwright for Mennonite youth conventions, a youth pastor, an author and more. *—Hesston College*

—compiled by Anna Groff

IN BRIEF

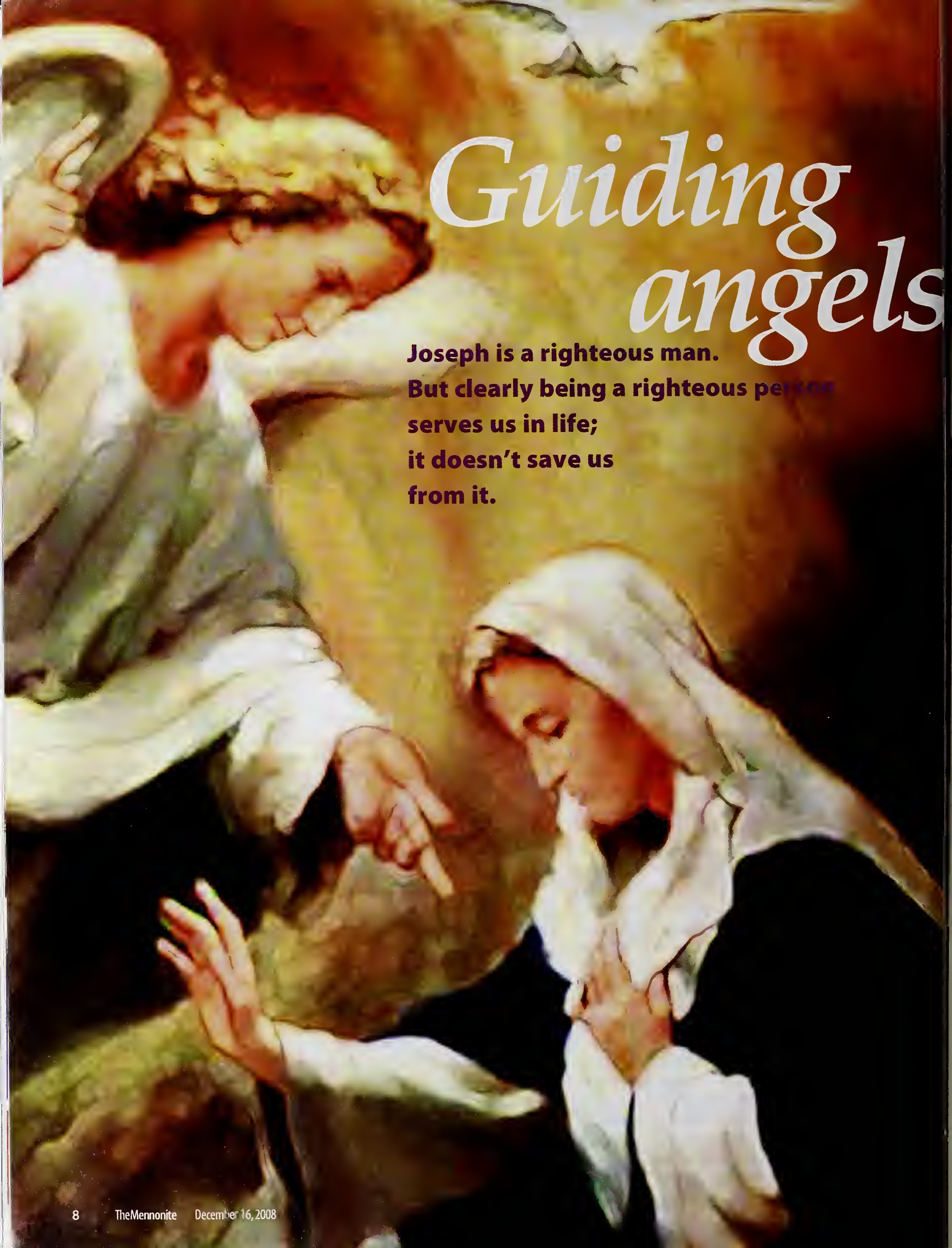
Winning speech on antiracism



Josh Chittum's speech "Peacefully Confronting the Walls of Racism" took first place in the C. Henry Smith Oratorical Contest administered by Mennonite Central Committee. Chittum is a student at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. Anna Yoder, a Bluffton (Ohio) University student, won second place with "Extending the Table: Blessing the Alien in our Midst," and Leah Reesor of Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., took third place with "Giving and Receiving: Exploring the Spirituality of Service."*—MCC*

Peace advocates awarded by MMA

Dave and Krista King Powell received the 2008 MMA Journey Award Nov. 23 at their church, Springdale Mennonite Church in Waynesboro, Va. The couple was chosen based on their holistic stewardship. They served as coordinators for Virginia Mennonite Conference's Peace Committee the last five years. Dave was the first organizer of the Hymn Sing for Peace, held annually for the last 10 years in Washington. Krista has helped facilitate stewardship education at Springdale as church treasurer.*—MMA*



Guiding angels

**Joseph is a righteous man.
But clearly being a righteous person
serves us in life;
it doesn't save us
from it.**

Reflections on Matthew 2:12-23 and Christmas from the days immediately following

and Rachel's tears

by David A. Stevens

Do you know how many automobile accidents there were on Christmas Day, how many house fires, how many car bombings, how many children succumbed to preventable diseases?

All those things happened. But do we have to hear about them now? Doesn't that sound more like the news than the Good News?

Frankly, that's how this Scripture passage strikes many people. It's about murder and refugees. Does that sound like the Good News or just the news?

Matthew 2:12-23 is a hard passage to hear, especially on the days right after Christmas. Can't we bask just a little longer in the giving and goodwill and glory? Give us our reality check next week. Does the text have any Good News for us at all?

Well, to start with, there are angels all around. One of them says to Joseph, "Don't be afraid." So he gets over his fear and marries Mary. What he gets for his obedience and act of mercy is, first, a child not his own, and second, fleeing for his life. Joseph is a righteous man. But clearly being a righteous person serves us in life; it doesn't save us from it.

The astronomy club from Iraq arrives bearing gifts—gifts that are king-friendly, not baby-friendly. Then the astronomers pack up their telescopes. And just like Joseph, they are warned in a dream and do not report back to Herod about where the child is. Herod is not amused with the guys from the east, just as Pharaoh was not amused with the midwives who saved the Hebrew boys in the days of baby Moses. It's déjà vu all over again.

Then once more an angel appears to Joseph: Take the child and his mother to Egypt. Isn't that interesting? Right after Jesus is born, the task of the angels changes from praising his birth to saving his life. The Savior isn't safe. The Savior must first be saved. Matthew does not protect us from a Savior who needs protecting. But there are angels all around. In this world of death and displacement God is guiding his people. The light shines in the darkness.

So Joseph enacts the witness protection plan for Jesus and God's own Son becomes a refugee; God's own Son runs from Herod's death squad like a Sudanese villager; God's own Son wanders like the Amazon Indian on the streets of Rio; God's own Son is homeless, like an abused woman in Moundridge, Kan. God's own Son understands refugees; he's one of them. Jesus is not God-with-us in some superficial way but all the way. That's Good News.

What do you think? Was there a family down there along the Nile River that took Jesus and his parents in, that gave Joseph a job building decks and taught Mary Egyptian as a second language, and a little friend who showed Jesus how to balance a basket of onions on his head? God provides. Isn't it true? Wherever there is a robbery,

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

there is a Good Samaritan; wherever there is a Herod, there are magi; wherever there is a Pharaoh, there is a Pharaoh's daughter who opens the basket and gives the crying baby a home. In the world of death and displacement, God gives us friends in unexpected places. That's Good News.

While Jesus is away, Herod kills. Matthew says Herod kills out of fear: "He was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him" (Matthew 2:1-3). I've wondered about that. How did Herod's personal fear become everybody's fear?

Is it possible that Herod turned fear into public policy, turned fear into a strategy for governing, a way to control the citizens? Is that how everyone came to be afraid? If so, Herod was not the last ruler to use fear as a strategy for governance. When the people are afraid they get compliant. It's amazing what a citizen body will let a ruler get away with when they are afraid, and all because Herod had a personal score with those guys from the east. But friends, amazing things happen; we can't count anyone out. Luke 8:3 says that the wife of an accountant who worked for Herod's family became an important follower of Jesus. The light shines in the darkness.

Herod was not the last ruler to use fear as a strategy for governance.

Herod kills and Rachel weeps. Rachel is the ancestress of the endless lineage of grieving mothers. Her tears are never dried, not even on Christmas, because the Herods of history take no holiday. When I was little, I used to climb on a cannon in the town park, but where is the statue that honors Rachel? Matthew says the Christmas choir includes praising angels and grieving mothers.

Some time later, Jesus comes back from Egypt, but it's not the same. Can you ever really go back? While he was away, Jesus' preschool in Bethlehem fell victim to an early Columbine. Sixteen years later, at his graduation, there will be lots of empty seats and unwritten diplomas. Jesus comes back, but not really. He is David's son, born in David's city, but he can't grow up in David's city because he isn't safe.

His family relocates to Nazareth—a tiny, insignificant village where everybody knows your name. Angel's guidance notwithstanding, they relocate. What would it have been like for Mary and Joseph to stay in Bethlehem and face the other parents when yours is the kid that lived because you were out of town when the terrorists came? Can you imagine? That's why some families left Littleton, Colo. That's why the secretary in the North Tower who called in sick on Sept. 11 sits in the therapist's office week after week and stares with nothing to say. It's not easy being a survivor. Jesus understands. He's one of them. That's Good News. The light shines in the darkness.

Matthew says nothing more about Jesus' childhood. After this passage, Matthew skips ahead 30 years. Christmas is over abruptly, even in the Bible. That's reality; just like traffic accidents and Rachel's tears and fear as public policy.

But friends, there is Good News for us, even after Christmas. In this world of death and displacement, we can't count anyone out. Jesus knows. God gives friends in unexpected places. Jesus knows. Sometimes our biggest accomplishment is to grieve our losses, move on and simply survive. Jesus knows. The Bethlehem that should be your perfect fit, won't always work out. But there is a Nazareth where you can start over. Jesus knows. And friends, God does guide us in this world. Jesus knows. He is the light that shines in the darkness.

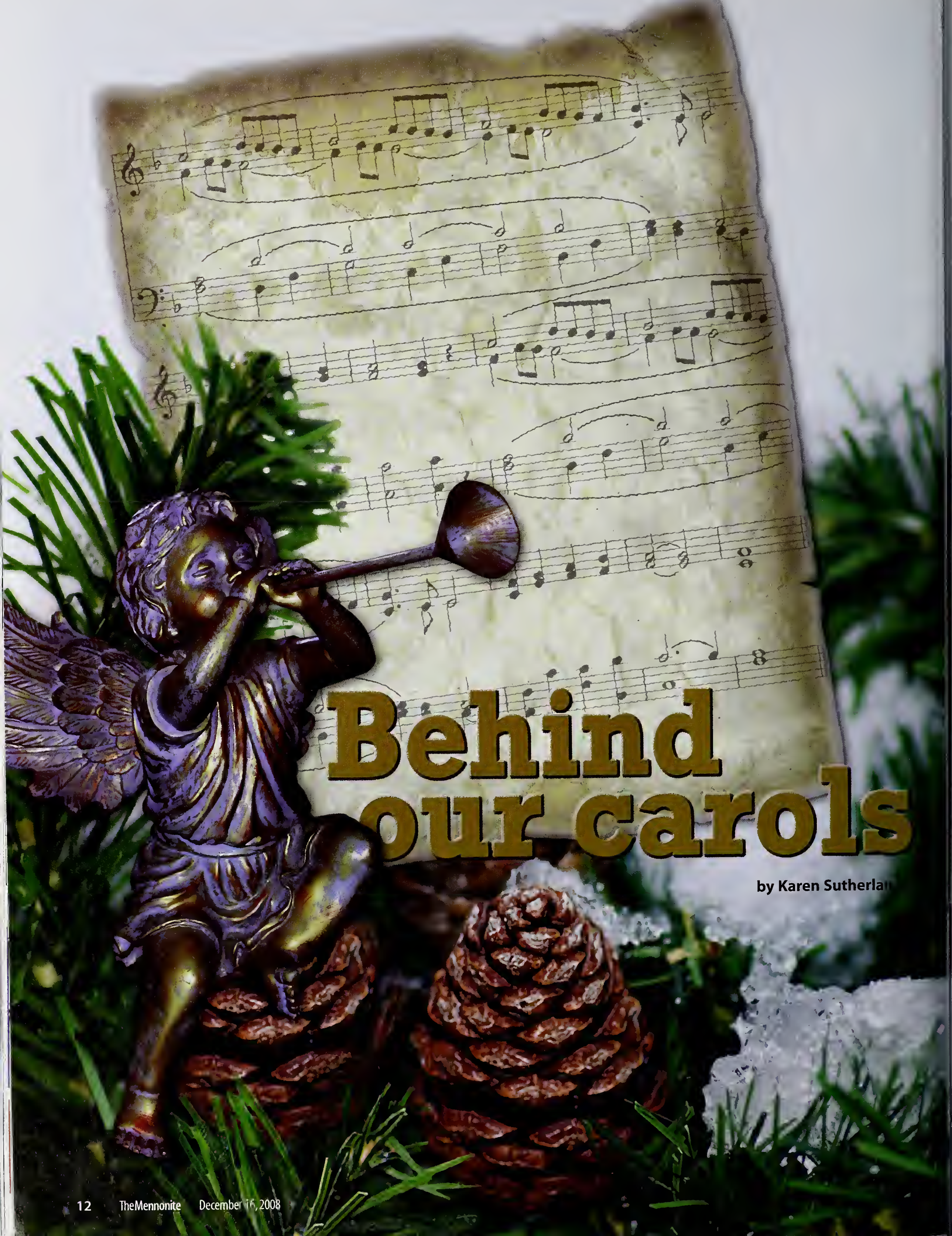
David A. Stevens is pastor of Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.

The gift

by Sean Lause

The day my mother dropped a net
of oranges on the kitchen table
and the net broke and the oranges
rolled and we snatched them,
my brother and I,
peeled back the skin and bit deep
to make the juice explode with our laughter,
and my father spun one orange in his palm
and said quietly, "This was Christmas, 1938,"
and he said it without bitterness or anger,
just observing his life
from far away, this tiny world
cupped in one palm,
I learned
I had no way, no vision, no right
to comprehend an orange.

Sean Lause lives in Bluffton, Ohio.



Behind our carols

by Karen Sutherla

Where did our Christmas carols come from?

He was a descendent of the original Pilgrims, a graduate of Harvard Divinity School, a clergyman of some renown. He wrote religious books and was coeditor of a magazine called *Monthly Religious Magazine* (1859-1871). In 1849, Edmund Hamilton Sears wrote a poem called "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear." It was published in the *Christian Register*. In 1850, Richard Storrs Willis, a Yale graduate who had studied in Germany with Felix Mendelssohn, wrote the tune.

When I was a small child, we celebrated Christmas in our home on Christmas Eve. Our Swedish smorgasbord was followed by the singing of carols. We each had our favorite. For my grandfather it was "Var Halsad Skona Morgonstund" ("All Hail to Thee, O Blessed Morn"), a hymn he learned in Sweden as a boy.

"Morgonstund" was based on an old German hymn of the 1620s. It was rewritten by Johan O. Wallin in 1819. Ernst W. Olson translated the hymn into English in 1901. Music for the hymn was written in 1599 by Phillip Nicolai.

What would Christmas be without the singing of carols? In shopping malls, caroling door-to-door or in church services (like the Julotta of my childhood), Christmas carols express the message of Christmas. But when did we start caroling? Where did the custom come from?

Most of us assume the first carolers were the angels who sang to the shepherds on a hillside in Bethlehem. The oldest known carol was written in the fourth century by St. Ambrose around the time the Catholic Church made December 25 Christmas Day.

After that, almost 1,000 years passed before other carols were written. In fact, the oldest known carol in the English language—still sung today—is "The First Nowell." This popular song came in the early 1500s from Cornwall, England. No one knows who wrote it.

The word "carol" originally meant "round dance." In Greek, it was called "charos." In old English it was "kyrriole," in French "carole." As time went on the carol became a joyful religious song. Now it refers to a song sung exclusively at Christmas.

The oldest known carol was written in the fourth century by St. Ambrose around the time the Catholic Church made December 25 Christmas Day.

Other songs from the 1500s-1600s include "Deck the Halls," "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," "I Saw Three Ships" and "O Tannenbaum" ("O Christmas Tree"), just to name a few.

One of these carols would have been long forgotten if it had not been for England's Queen Victoria. In 1846, she established the custom of the decorated Christmas tree. When the Germans contributed "O Tannenbaum" to our catalog of carols, it had only one verse. Then, because of Queen Victoria's Christmas tree, two verses were added by German poet Ernst S. Anschutz.

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13

One of the most powerful rulers of the 16th century was King Philip II of Spain. He is known for the Spanish Armada of 1588 and the establishment of the Douai College in France. Douai College was important because of the Douay Version of the Old Testament. But Douai is also known as the birthplace of one of the most popular carols of all time.

During the 18th century, an Englishman moved to Douai to teach music and make calligraphic copies of ancient hymns. John Francis Wade's beautiful hymn copies were carried all over Europe. Sometime in the 1740s, Wade composed his own hymn in Latin. The four stanzas were called "Adeste Fideles," but because of his reputation as a calligrapher, no one believed he had written the song himself.

It was attributed to many different composers, but there was no good answer. In the 1780s it was brought to England and introduced in the chapel at the Portuguese Embassy. A clergyman, Frederick Oakeley, translated it into English. It wasn't until 1947 that researchers discovered that Wade was indeed the song's composer—words and music.

The 19th century in America brought many more carols. In 1885, in the Lutheran churches of the Pennsylvania Dutch country, a song came into being that was attributed to Martin Luther and often called "Luther's Cradle Hymn," but it was not; it lacks his musical style. Most music researchers say James Ramsey Murray composed "Away in a Manger," but as late as 1980 some still insisted it was Luther's song.

Phillips Brooks was the most talented preacher of the 19th century. He held his congregation steady during the Civil War. He gave the sermon in honor of Abraham Lincoln's funeral. Toward the end of his life he became the Episcopal Bishop of Massachusetts. But his fame comes from writing a song, one most of us sing every Christmas. After the war, his church sent him on a sabbatical, and he traveled all over the world. He spent Christmas in the Holy Land and returned to America with "Palestine singing in his soul."

When he returned he composed a hymn and asked his friend, organist Louis Redner, to write the music. "O Little Town of Bethlehem" was introduced to the world in 1868 by the Sunday school children of Brooks' congregation.

On Christmas Eve 1818, a pastor sat at his desk preparing his Christmas sermon. It wasn't going well, so the pastor was upset when he heard a persistent knocking at his door. He opened the door to find one of the poorer members of his congregation. He asked the pastor if he would please come and visit a brand new baby and her mother.

Putting on a heavy coat, the pastor followed the man up into the foothills of Oberndorf, Austria. He was ushered into a crude hut and spoke a word of blessing to a lovely mother and her new baby. Trudging back down the path he was calmed by the beauty of twinkling stars and snow-covered mountains.

The visit he had just made somehow brought his mind back to the original Christmas story and that infant and his mother. As he walked on, the words in his head kept turning into rhyme. By the time Joseph Mohr reached his desk he had formed the lines of a simple poem. Hurriedly he scribbled the words onto a sheet of paper.

Again his coat went on, and out into the dark he went. He brought his poem to Franz Gruber, the other educated person in the town. The two were good friends. Gruber served as the town's schoolmaster and as the organist for the little St. Nicholas Church. However, the mice had been at the organ, and it was out of commission. Mohr asked Gruber if he could write music to go with the words. So he wrote the music for two voices and a guitar.

On Christmas Day 1818, the congregation heard for the first time a carol that would be loved wherever Christmas is celebrated:

"Silent night, holy night,
all is calm, all is bright."

By the time Joseph Mohr reached his desk he had formed the lines of a simple poem. Hurriedly he scribbled the words onto a sheet of paper.

Karen Sutherland is a member of College Church in Wheaton, Ill.

Christmas and tomatoes

Sometimes the simplest things are the most memorable.

by Katie Ma tin

You may find it strange to talk about Christmas and tomatoes, but let me tell you my story.

We knew it was going to be a hard Christmas. My therapy of three to five times per week was absorbing all our income and then some. It would be hard for me to get therapy over Christmas. That would make the pain almost unbearable. It would also make it hard for me to sit, stand or even breathe. Even with my husband being off, we knew it would be rough.

There really wasn't anything either of us desperately needed or wanted, so we decided not to buy presents for each other. That way we'd have enough money for therapy.

We also bought few presents for anyone else. Hoping no one would mind, we put that money toward therapy as well.

Although my spouse didn't mind, it bothered me that he didn't have any brightly colored presents under the tree to unwrap. The more I thought about it, the sadder I felt.

Before I could get to the pity-party stage, the phone rang. It was one of our neighbors. He said he had been thinking about us and thought he had something we might like to have for Christmas.

In the course of the conversation, he explained. As we knew, he had a large garden that summer. The tomatoes had done well, except for the ones the deer had eaten.

Toward the end of September, around frost time, he took the last of the green tomatoes off the vine. Then he wrapped each one carefully and stored it in his mother's basement.

Although my spouse didn't mind, it bothered me that he didn't have any brightly colored presents under the tree to unwrap. Then the phone rang.

According to the neighbor, the tomatoes were ready—perfect for our Christmas dinner. We got in the van and drove to pick up the tomatoes and, after visiting awhile, drove home.

We came in the warm house, plugged in the Christmas tree and turned on the Christmas music. There, as we sat by the tree and in front of the wood stove, we counted our blessings. We were grateful for all the usual things such as food and heat and a place to call home. Before we were done, we realized how blest we truly were.

The list grew and grew. Finally, we added Christmas and tomatoes.

We may not have had everything this Christmas, but we learned that sometimes the simplest things are the most memorable. That is why I will always remember this Christmas and the gift of the tomatoes.

Katie Martin lives in Danbury, N.C.

We can learn from those who witnessed Jesus' birth.

Christmas

by Matthew Yoder

The Christmas season is an opportunity for us to think about and celebrate the first Christmas. Our Christmas tradition includes, in the lighting of the Advent candles, a celebration of love, joy, peace and hope. This year, as I thought about that first Christmas, my mind turned toward hope. And not just any hope but the divine promise of fulfilled hope. I remembered that the hopes fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ had their origins hundreds of years before the advent of the Messiah, among the children of Israel.

Israel, as God's chosen people, was a proud though not always obedient people. Because of Israel's disobedience, God showed sovereignty through the strength of Israel's enemies rather than through Israel. First the nation of Israel became a nation divided in itself between the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Not long after, the northern kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrian empire, and portions of the Israelite kingdom were deported and redistributed among the Assyrian territories. The northern territory of Israel thus became known as Samaria.

The hopes fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ had their origins hundreds of years before the advent of the Messiah, among the children of Israel.

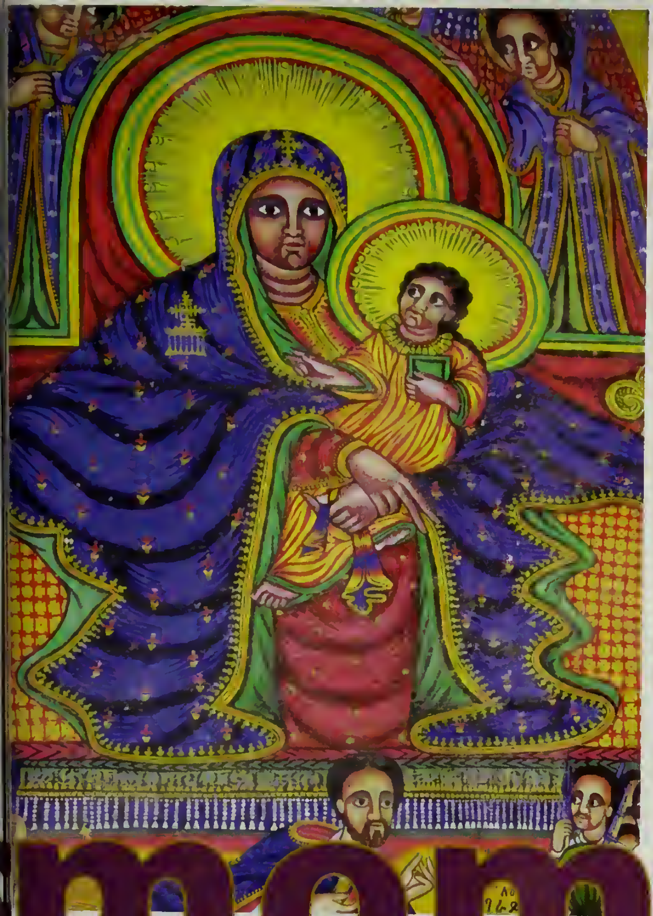
The southern kingdom of Judah also soon fell. Finding themselves caught between the two greater powers of Egypt and Babylon, the people of Judah decided to ally themselves with Egypt rather than with God. Since Egypt was the weaker power, both soon fell to Babylon. Jerusalem, the heart of the Judean kingdom, was conquered, and the most important part of Judah's relationship with God, the Temple, was destroyed. The rulers and artisans of the Judean kingdom were also deported and redistributed among the empire of Babylon, which had grown to swallow even the Assyrian empire to the north.

Not long after the devastation of the Babylonian exile, the Persian Empire conquered and subdued Babylon. The Persian king, Cyrus, allowed Jews exiled during Babylonian rule to return to their homeland and rebuild the Temple. However, Judah continued to struggle with political conflict and economic hardship. Soon the Persians were conquered by invading Greeks, led by Alexander the Great, and occupation of the land of Israel changed hands yet again.

Although the later Maccabean revolt temporarily expelled the crumbling and conflict-weakened Greek establishment in Judea, the subsequent Jewish Hasmonean dynasty was eventually conquered by the expanding Roman Empire.

Israel experienced a long history of division, subjugation, deportation and occupation, first at the hands of the Assyrians, then the Babylonians, then the Persians, followed by the Greeks and finally the Roman Empire. During this period, it was not Israel's kings but its prophets who led Israel toward obedience to God. The prophets mediated God's word to the people, warning against faulty alliances and hope in sources weaker than God. Conversely, the prophets also mediated the desperate hopes of a conquered and broken people to God through prayer and supplication.

Also during this period, different groups emerged within Judaism, each with hopes for God's deliverance uniquely placed. The Jewish ruling class, the Herodians, placed their hope in a successful alliance with the powers of Rome. The Sadducees, a class of Temple priests who did not believe in the resurrection, placed their hopes in all the power and prestige that can be gained in this life. The Pharisees' hope was in a kingdom of God established on the wholly and correctly interpreted Mosaic laws. The hope of the Zealots lay in militant rebellion and guerrilla warfare. The Essenes withdrew to the wilderness in hopes that



moments

God would send both a political king and a spiritual savior who would establish God's kingdom on earth together.

It was under the terrifying force of the Pax Romana and the watchful eye of the Roman Caesar's vassal, King Herod of Judea, that the hopes and fears of all those years were finally met one starry night in Bethlehem.

But Israel's hopes for deliverance were not met in a way anyone expected. Suddenly, those who thought they were within the inner circle of God's kingdom found themselves on the edges, and those who had been abandoned to the edges of the kingdom found themselves in the center of it. The weak were cared for, and the Herodians missed it because their hope was in the power of Rome. The poor were blessed, and the hungry fed, and the Sadducees missed it because their hope was in the comfort of this life. The sick and lame were healed, and the Pharisees missed it because their hope was in the purity laws of Moses. Peace came to Israel, and the Zealots missed it because their hope was in the sword. The kingdom of God burst forth in our world, and the Essenes missed it because they had withdrawn to the desert.

As I thought about all the people who missed the miracle of Jesus' birth, I grew weary and sad. Then I remembered that the miracle was not totally missed, that those who did make it to Bethlehem caught a glimpse of hope fulfilled. A handful of shepherds were there because they came obediently when called. A few foreign scholars made it there because they patiently studied and obediently followed the signs God provided. I also remembered that the miracle was not a one-time deal. I realized the kingdom of God, inaugurated on that special night, continues to pierce the fabric of our time and space in little Christmas moments wherever the foreigner is welcomed, the sick are healed, the hungry are fed and the needy cared for in Christ's name.

Every year the holiday season provides an opportunity to reflect on these Christmas moments and to ask ourselves, each other and our church if we are missing these Christmas moments because our hope is in the government or in the opulence of this life? Is our hope misplaced in the law, the sword or sectarian withdrawal? Or are we present to bear witness to and participate in these Christmas moments because we come obediently when called? Because we observe and obediently follow the signs that God provides?

Every year the holiday season provides an opportunity to reflect on these Christmas moments and to ask ourselves, each other and our church if we are missing these Christmas moments because our hopes are elsewhere.

Matthew Yoder is a student at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif.

Coordinated communication

Marty Lehman is director of communications and development for Mennonite Church USA.

Last February's Executive Board action has received considerable press—with much of it being less than favorable. It has also occupied the conversations of many denominational staff. It has even hurt relationships, as people have taken opposing positions.

Much about the action is not always fully understood, though. The action has also asked for a more coordinated communication and development function across the church, which includes marketing, news, church relations and convention planning. The Executive Board is calling for us to work together in new ways—in ways that will allow our communication to congregations to be more coordinated.

Thirty-five people from 11 churchwide organizations* came together Nov. 18 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., to begin conversations about how we can work together in new ways. We spent the day worshiping, getting to know each other and planning our work between now and the Mennonite Church USA Convention in Columbus in July 2009. (We also ate some really good food.)

The suggestions that came out of this day are amazing and exciting. There were many ideas of ways we could share our calendars—so our mailings can be more coordinated, for example. There were ideas of using the highlighted Scripture from our conventions as a focus throughout bienniums.

As the person charged with leading this team, I'm excited to be involved in this process, to see people work together in new ways and to see the many good ideas we generate together.

During that day, I invited people to develop a new working culture, to do the following:

- Move away from holding information too tightly and sharing it as needed. Information can become power—and as Mennonites we think we have no power—and if we withhold helpful information, it becomes a power issue.
- Hold each other accountable. Get away from our traditional passive-aggressive nature and talk to each other when we disagree or feel others are not carrying through on their responsibilities.
- Be mindful of the two greatest commandments Jesus left for us to follow—to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. If we concentrate on mastering these two commandments, it will take care of all the other issues we may have.
- Have fun working together. I invited people not to take themselves too seriously, to take care of each other and themselves and make work fun.

While many unanswered questions remain as we begin to work together as a team, we are committed to working together in new ways. We are all committed to thinking beyond our specific organization and about our work in a more holistic context. We are committed to carrying out the mission of our specific organization but doing that while being more mindful of what our sister organizations are doing.

Why should you, a member of Mennonite Church USA, care about this? My hopes:

- Our churchwide communication to members will be improved and will be more organic. We will communicate not only from our own organizational perspective but from a broader denominational viewpoint.
- We will put a higher priority on the needs of our members than the needs of our organizations. (This may mean one print piece rather than three or four.)
- You'll see a difference, see a more coordinated communication, development, church relations and marketing approach.
- We will be faithful to our calling and our assignment, will carry out the mission of our organizations and the mission of Mennonite Church USA.

If you have ideas you'd like to feed into this process, let me know. Contact me at MartyL@MennoniteUSA.org or 866-866-2872. In the meantime, we welcome your prayers as we continue dreaming of new ways to strengthen the congregations and witness of Mennonite Church USA. TM

*Participating organizations included Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite Publishing Network, Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, Mennonite Mission Network, *The Mennonite*, MHS Alliance, MMA, Mennonite Women, Mennonite Men, Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, Central District Mennonite Conference.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Of Mennonites and hobbits**—Greg Albright
- **Praising God with our diversity**—Linda Oyer
- **I finally read Menno**—Lawrence E. Ressler

MC USA leaders visit two Congo groups

Congolese leader: 'The best process is one that … provides sufficient resistance.'

Two Mennonite Church USA leaders returned to Congo Nov. 11-24 to follow up on a church delegation visit of more than a year ago. They found resistance but concluded that the resistance was good because it provided the tension necessary to make progress in relationship building.

Mennonite Church USA moderator Sharon Waltner (see photo at right) and associate executive director Ron Byler traveled to Kinshasa and Mbuji Mayi to strengthen church relationships with the two conferences: Communaute Mennonite au Congo (CMCo) and Communaute Evangelique Mennonite (CEM).

In Kinshasa, Waltner and Byler participated in the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Forum, a three-year process bringing together youth, women and pastors with leaders of the two Mennonite conferences and Mennonite Brethren to talk about how they relate to each other and to Mennonites in other parts of the world.

"The best process is one that bothers us, one that provides sufficient resistance to enable progress," said Toss Mukwa, the facilitator of the group. He cited electricity and gearshifts as examples of how resistance brings forward movement.

Mukwa encouraged participants to think about the future and the gifts each member has to share.

"How do we engage all our members in the work of the church, not just this small group?" Mukwa asked.

Tim Lind, MWC staff, is assigned to work with Congo and Mennonite Church USA leaders. Rod Hollinger Janzen is director of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM). Waltner and Byler returned with the two men to Mbuji Mayi. They had visited the area 500 miles east of Kinshasa with a delegation in early 2007.

In Mbuji Mayi they met with Benjamin Mubenga, CEM president, Mathieu Shimatu, vice president, and more than a half dozen women and men who are key church leaders. Leaders of the two churches talked about the opportunities and challenges of being faithful churches in their respective cultural settings.

Leaders of CEM showed their incredulity at the realities of church life in the United States. How can the church community be the church when it only meets on Sunday morning, they wondered? In Mbuji Mayi, women, youth and other groups in the church meet at least weekly to support each other and to be involved in their communities.

"We help each other in times of difficulty, and we seek peace," said Marie Claire Kamwanya Meta, national director of women's work for CEM who is currently studying theology. "We encourage families to be self-sufficient."

CEM and Mennonite Church USA leaders completed an agreement committing themselves in the future to the mutual sharing of gifts, face-to-face visits and responding to each other's needs. The agreement calls for special attention to working together to train pastors, nurture women's leadership gifts, increase youth involvement in the church and exchange experiences in church planting and peacemaking.

After meeting with the CEM leaders, MC USA church leaders met with several CMCo leaders in Kinshasa, including president Komuesa Kalunga and vice president Birakara Ilowa. The exchange remained formal until Birakara said, "Our people know that a U.S. delegation came earlier, and what has happened since then?"

Leaders acknowledged that relationships had not yet developed to the point where tangible progress was obvious.

"Your first visit turned a page for us," said Komuesa. "When we get to know each other, we can build relationships much more easily. We want to find new ways for north and south to work together, including our congregations."

Byler presented a book of letters and drawings from children at San José 2007 to children in Tshikapa. The children's offerings in San José were for AIMM for medical supplies for hospitals in Tshikapa.

CMCo and Mennonite Church USA leaders agreed to work with MWC on a process that will result in an agreement when they meet in Paraguay for the MWC global gathering in July 2009.—*Mennonite Church USA*

Photo provided

Celebrating their hopes for women in church leadership (from left): Mennonite Church USA moderator Sharon Waltner; Marie Claire Kamwanya Meta, national director for women's work for Communaute Evangelique Mennonite (CEM); Florence Nsumbu, women's president for CEM, and Josee Mbombo Bintu, women's secretary for CEM.

Top 10 stories for Mennonite Church USA in 2008 include rescue, student deaths

Compiled by Anna Groff

1. Businessman freed in Afghanistan

Al Geiser, a Mennonite businessman, was freed after being captured by armed men and held for 56 days in Afghanistan. Hidden among the rocks in the mountains, the guards forced him to lie all day and all night on a plot of earth the size of his torso, his feet extended over a pile of rocks. He was taken down the mountain and indoors after 52 days. The Associated Press reported Oct. 22 that "U.S. Special Forces soldiers freed a kidnapped American ... during a nighttime mission [the previous] week—a rare hostage rescue in a country where ransom abductions have become increasingly common." *The Mennonite* learned from several sources that Al Geiser was the unnamed subject of the Associated Press report. Geiser, Kidron, Ohio, had worked in Afghanistan developing grass-roots hydroelectric projects since 2000, along with Gladys, his wife, who taught in a Kabul school. (See Nov. 4 and photo at left.)

1. Al Geiser

2. EB proposes, then defers one-board model

In a meeting March 16-17, the Executive Board shared its vision for a reformed and integrated churchwide organization. The EB called for a unified churchwide communication and identity system, a cohesive funding system and the development of one integrated board of directors for the denomination that would replace individual boards for each agency. On June 22, the EB adopted a statement, "We are ready to defer the model of one leadership board, provided that we can find an alternative route for integrating our churchwide priorities." (See April 1 and July 8.)

Anna Groff

6. The band Secondhand Pants performed at the "People's Summit" on July 9. Band members are Curtis Wiebe (left) and Marlon Wiebe.

3. Lancaster Conference ordains women

On May 16, the Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Conference Board of Bishops approved a credentialing policy that will allow for the ordination of women. The new policy lodges all LMC credentialing decisions with the board of bishops and a recently formed Conference Credentialing Commission. Previously, LMC did not allow ordination for women, and a bishop board proposal to do so did not pass in a January 2007 vote by conference leaders holding ministerial credentials.

Linford King, bishop for the Lancaster city district, ordained two women in the churches he oversees in 2007 and 2008, even though conference policy did not allow for the ordination of women at that time. Consequently, the conference's bishop board felt compelled to deal with King because he "broke covenant" with the bishop board. To address this dilemma, the board hired mediators Marcus Smucker and David Brubaker to lead several conversations with King. (See Feb. 5, March 4, June 3, Sept 2.)

4. MCC cosponsors meeting with Ahmadinejad

About 300 international religious and political figures, including Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, attended a dialogue at a Manhattan, N.Y., hotel Sept. 25 to discuss the role of religion in responding to global challenges and building peace and understanding among societies.

The dialogue was sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee, American Friends Service Committee, Quaker United Nations Office, Religions for Peace and World Council of Churches in consultation with the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations. (See Oct. 7.)

5. Health-care access plan for proceeds

During a meeting Sept. 18-20, the Executive Board gave its OK to a plan to provide health insurance coverage for all Mennonite Church USA pastors. The plan, called the Corinthian Plan, is to be communicated to Mennonite Church USA members in the coming months and must be approved by the Delegate Assembly at the Columbus 2009 convention next summer. If that happens, the plan should begin on Jan. 1, 2010, said Keith Harder, director of the Health Care Access Project.

The costs for the plan have three components: the insurance itself, mutual aid (guaranteed insurability) and access (the mission or justice component). (See Oct. 7.)

2008 meant changes for Mennonite Church USA: one-board model proposed and then deferred, executive directors leave, health-care access plan accepted

6. Few MC USA members attend summit

The Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada binational convention, "At the Crossroads: Promise and Peril," was held in Winnipeg, Man., July 8-10. Five-hundred and seventy people attended the summit—56 from the United States. Jim Schrag, executive director for Mennonite Church USA, acknowledged the low number of U.S. Mennonites in attendance. "Usually the ratios are different than they are today," Schrag said. "There are far more Canadians here today than there are Americans. That presents a good deal more promise than peril." (See July 22 and photo on page 20.)

7. Goshen, EMU students die in accidents

Deanne Binde, a junior at Goshen (Ind.) College, died in a tragic automobile accident when she was traveling home to Lake Park, Minn., at the end of the school year on May 22. Deanne, a communication and theater major, was the daughter of Dale and Debbie (Saunders) Binde. She volunteered with Goshen's Meals on Wheels and La Casa and regularly attended St. John's Catholic Church, Goshen. (See June 17 and photo at right)

Matthew R. Garber, a 2008 graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., died by drowning in Costa Rica on July 1. Garber, 22, of Elizabethtown, Pa., was swimming with a group of young people in a cove that was not known to be dangerous. A riptide caught several of the swimmers; all but Garber managed to return safely to shore. He was spending the summer in Costa Rica assisting a missionary family and learning Spanish. (See July 22 and see photo at right.)

8. Changes at Mennonite Mutual Aid

In June, 18 months after becoming president of Mennonite Mutual Aid in Goshen, Ind., Larry Miller unveiled a new administrative structure for the stewardship agency of Mennonite Church USA. The new team will lead streamlined operations via four departments instead of the six current departments—each with its own senior vice president. The four new departments are: corporate services, finances, sales and distribution, products and services. The new team took the remainder of 2008 to develop each department. One current senior vice president was named to a new role: Rod D. Diller, senior vice president for trust and foundation services, will lead the sales and distribution department. (See June 17.)

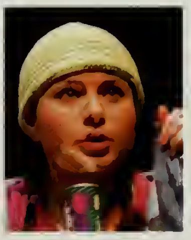
9. Schrag, Byler to leave Executive Leadership

On Oct. 19, Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA's executive director, made official his plans to retire on Nov. 30, 2009. Schrag's plan to retire will coincide with his 65th birthday and will conclude 35 years of ministry.

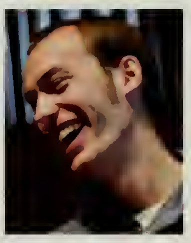
In July 2007, associate executive director Ron Byler made known to the Executive Board his decision to complete his employment with Mennonite Church USA between July and December 2009. He has not yet determined the exact date his resignation will become official. (See Oct. 21.)

10. Vietnamese church made official

After the Vietnam Mennonite Church fulfilled all requirements for full legal status, the Vietnam National Religious Affairs Committee approved its request to organize its first official general assembly (the second general assembly according to the church's historical records). The assembly was held Nov. 15-17 at a guest house and conference complex in Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City. (See page 6)



7. Deanne Binde



7. Matthew Garber

Good work...*advanced.*

Western Mennonite School (Salem, OR) contracted with AAI for enrollment counsel.

ADVANCEMENT
Associates

866-777-1606 Toll Free
info@advanassociates.com
www.advanassociates.com

Consulting In
Strategic Visioning
Fundraising
Capital Campaigns
Enrollment

Building relationships. Advancing your mission.

MCC braces for coming economic storm

Mennonite Central Committee's international program faces budget shortfall.

Mennonite Central Committee is preparing for leaner times but remains optimistic that a faithful constituency and diverse sources of income will lessen the impact of the economic downturn.

In Canada, MCC is anticipating that income from donations, designated giving, thrift shops, MCC's account in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and government grants will make it possible for MCC to meet financial commitments approved in its 2008-2009 financial plan.

In the United States, executive director Rolando Santiago projects an overall budget shortfall of approximately 5 percent.

MCC's international program is currently facing a budget shortfall, says Jerry Shank, interim director for these programs. There are three main reasons: the declining value of the Canadian currency; decreased income from investments and the possibility of a decline in giving as is happening at many other charities. MCC has a rainy-day fund to help cover unexpected expenses or a sudden drop in income. A portion of this fund will be used to cover the initial budget shortfall. However, further reductions may be required in the new year if contributions to MCC are lower than anticipated, says Shank. —*MCC*

• • travel with a purpose • •

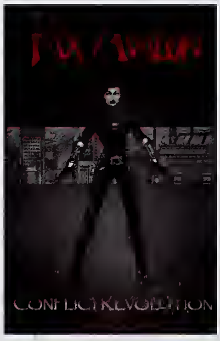
Mennonite Your Way

2009 TOURS

- Hawaii 4-Island Cruise *March 11-22*
- Mexico & Copper Canyon *March 27 - April 7*
- Alaska-Yukon Tour/Cruise *June 15 - July 1*
- Paraguay (MWC) & Peru *July 8 - 26*
- Lake Michigan Circle August 4-14
- Canadian Rockies *September 10 - October 1*
- Polar Bear Adventure *October 26-31*
- Europe & Passion Play *June/July/August 2010*

MYW Tours • Box 425 • Landisville, PA 17538 • 717/653-9288 • 800/296-1991
Email: myw1525@aol.com • web: www.mywtours.com

Herald Press: Wishing You the Gift of Books
Shop at our new webstore,www.mpn.net



Pax Avalon: Conflict Revolution

If you had something everybody wanted, what would you do? Blessed with an incredible gift, Julianna "Pax" Embry must choose between the glamour of a celebrity and the mission of a peacemaker. She teams up with the highly trained officers of Avalon City Special Operations as they face off against a mysterious enemy with his own designs on the city. The resulting crisis brings a clash of ideals that will change Avalon City forever. By **Steven "Reece" Friesen.**

Paper, 114 pages, $19.99 Poster, $7.99

RICHARD P. CHURCH
Foreword by Thomas L. Shaffer
First Be Reconciled
Challenging Christians in the Courts

First Be Reconciled: Challenging Christians in Court

Richard P. Church seeks to recover the church as a unique reconciled body in a world of enmity, particularly via civil litigation. He traces the church's historic reticence to litigate within the body and with non-believers through key biblical texts, a historical survey, with a particular focus on the Anabaptist witness, and a constructive theological defense of the necessity of eschewing certain forms of civil litigation contrary to the church's witness of reconciliation.

Paper, 232 pages, $18.99

1 800 245-7894 x 278 • www.heraldpress.com

Herald Press
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

MEDA expands service for microfinance

Mennonite Economic Development Associates offers corporate HR expertise.

Mennonite Economic Development Associates has launched a new program to take senior-level corporate human resource expertise to microfinance institutions (MFIs) around the world. MEDA was to host six participants from around the world Nov. 30-Dec. 3 for the first Human Capital in Microfinance Fellows Program. Through MEDA's consulting work in human resources with MFIs worldwide, it has identified some basic challenges that impact the quality and reach of MFI services, including a lack of fundamental HR systems and a dearth of management skills. But beyond that, the microfinance sector also faces a shortage of skilled consultants to address these challenges and a lack of broad knowledge sharing within the industry.

"The MF Fellows Program will provide HR professionals with specialized training and practical skills to work directly with leading MFIs," says Julie Redfern, MEDA's director of microfinance, "and help them improve their HR functions so they can continue to deliver highly needed financial services to poor and underserved clients in Africa, Asia, Latin America and elsewhere."

Mark Alexander, who has 30 years of human resources management experience, will be part of the first class of MF fellows.—*MEDA*

AMBS

Jan. 26 Transitions:

The congregation as ecology of care

Learn how pastors can walk with members and congregations who are in transition in healthy, transformative ways. *Presenters: Nancy Kauffmann, Lloyd Miller and Daniel Schipani*

Hosted by the Church Leadership Center at ***Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary,*** *Elkhart Ind. Visit* ***www.ambs.edu/workshops*** *or call* ***574.296.6269*** *for details and registration.*

BLUFFTON
EMBRACING SPIRIT, ENGAGING MINDS

Discovery, Community, Respect, Service

"**As a Bible professor and director of peace and conflict studies at Bluffton University, I have the opportunity to emphasize and live out in the classroom the Mennonite values of close attention to scripture and nonviolent action.** I love reading the Bible with students and thinking about how Jesus' teachings ask all of his disciples to be peacemakers. It is exciting to see students take Jesus' call seriously for their own lives as they are making decisions about what sorts of people they will be in the world."

– Laura Brenneman, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion and director of peace and conflict studies

Bluffton admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.

Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817-2104
1.800.488.3257
www.bluffton.edu

Record contributions for *The Mennonite*

Readers donate $75,293 since March 1, nearly double previous year's total.

As of Dec. 9, the organizations and individuals listed on pages 24-27 made a financial contribution to *The Mennonite* during the current fiscal year. In addition, 255 contributors made contributions and elected not to have their names listed.

Academia Menonita Betania
Merlin & Kathleen Aeschliman
Alfred & Miriam Albrecht
Alvin Alderfer
Brent & Deirdre Alderfer
Russell & Gladys Alderfer
Sanford & Evelyn Alderfer
Wilmer & Lois Alderfer
Beatrix Amstutz
Cliff & Lois Amstutz
Mark & Jacquie Amstutz
Harlan & Jean Anders
Marvin & Grace Anders
Robert & Barbara Army
Don & Martha Augsburger
J & Elizabeth Augspurger
Elda Bachman
Mary Elise Baer
Floyd Bartel
Karl & Evelyn Bartsch
William & Donna Baum
Albert & Katherine Bauman
Ruth Bauman
Howard & Phyllis Baumgartner
Lewis & Alice Beachy
Vernon & Nora Beachy
Caprice Becker
Duane & Deanna Becker
Katie Beiler
Michael & Alice Bender
Paul & Leona Bender
John & Barbara Benner
Millard & Lura Benner
Ruth Benner
Maurice & Cecelia Berkey
John & Evelyn Bertsche
John & Dee Birkey
Glen Birky
John & Rebecca Bixler
Nelson & Peggy Blosser
Stanley & Anita Bohn
Regan Bonato
Ellis & Ruby Bontrager
Warren & Annabelle Bontrager
Bertha Born
Dave & Mary Bowen
Claude & Mary Boyer
Stanley & Marylin Boyer
Milford Brandt
Robert & Lovina Brandt
Willis Breckbill
Clair & Donna Brenneman
Clair & Faye Brenneman
Grace Brenneman
Robert & Rachel Brenneman
Wally & Millie Brenneman
Michael & Lena Brown
James & Carley Brubaker
Mabel Brunk
Emma Buckwalter
John & Miriam Buckwalter
Judith Buckwalter
Richard & Deborah Buckwalter
Richard & Sara Buckwalter
Bruce & Meribeth Buhr
Arlin & Maretta Buller
Beatrice Buller
Kenneth Burk
Arnold & Phyllis Burkey
Galen & Nancy Burkey
Sarah Burkhalter
Paul & Miriam Burkholder
Timothy & Sharon Burkholder
Thomas & Kristina Burnett
Russell & Janet Buschert
Mary Butts
Sue Byler
Darren & Maria Calderon
James & Faith Carpenter
Mahlon & Elizabeth Cassel
Julio & Marta Castillo
John & Terry Cender
Jonathan & Rhoda Charles
Alfred & Gladys Claassen
Lavonda Claassen
William & Marshall Clarke
Hulda Classen
Mike & Melody Clymer
Paul & Esther Clymer
Bill Cockerham
Cathy Conrad
Irvin & Margaret Cordell
Lewis & Mary Coss
LaVerna Couey
Daniel & Emily Coyne
Frederick & Georgia Cress
Larry & Virginia Cress
Denton & Mary Croyle
Philip Croyle
Paul & Lois Dagen
Donald Davison
Adam Deckert
Kenneth Deckert
Lee & Ruth Delp
Byard & Betty Deputy
Florence Detweiler
Roy & Virginia Dick
Clayton & Inez Diener
Darrel & Leona Diener
Menno Diener
Calvin & Johnnie Doerksen
Kevin & Wanda Dorsing
Lois Drawbond
Edward Driskill
Kathleen Dudek
John & Sheila Duerksen
Joseph & Mary Lou Duerksen
Daniel & Elizabeth Dunmore
C J & Wilma Dyck
George Dyck
Peter Dyck
Myron & Geraldine Ebersole
Alma Eby
Paul & Marcella Ediger
John & Mary Eicher
Orlin & Ina Eigsti
Joseph Eigsti
Jacob & Lillian Elias
Royce Engle
Carl & Ruth Epp
Robert Epp
Walter Epp
Earl & Etta Esch
Larry Esmonde
Robert Ewy
Fairview Mennonite Church
George & Priscilla Falb
Jon & Gina Fiebelkorn
John & Pauline Fisher
Robert & Rachel Fisher
Melvin Flickinger
Jacob Flisher
Jean Flores
Roger Flueckiger
Calvin & Janet Franks
Harvey & Grace Freed
Lucille Frey
Mary Frey
Robert & Joyce Frey
Robert Freyenberger
Donald & Eleanor Friesen
Jacob & Lola Friesen
Ruby Friesen
Walter & Carol Friesen
Harry & David Froese
Charles & Marjorie Gautsche
Donald & Ruth Gehman
Marlo Gehring
Douglas & Dawn Gerber
Harry & Elaine Gerber
Robert & Fran Gerber
Ben & Florence Gerig
Kevin & Beth Gerig
William & Lucille Gering
Paul & Arlene Gingerich
Simon & Mary Gingerich
Paul & Ann Gingrich
Ervie & Mary Glick
Maggie Glick
Allen & Donna Gnagey
Emil Goering
Gladys Goering
Hilda Goering
Kevin & Sheryl Goering
Paul & Wilda Goering
Vernon & Marna Goering
Victor & Elizabeth Goering
Hilda Goering
Alice Goertz
Albert & Jane Good
Carl & Lois Good
Edwin & Betty Good
Ernest & Ellen Good
James & Dorcas Good
Vernon Good
Charles Goodling
Daniel & Mary Graber
David & Bonnie Graber
Harry & Kathleen Graber
Joseph & Cora Graber
Lorene Graber
Randall & Shirlyn Graber
Sam & Adeline Graber
Vern & Lorene Graber
Meryl Grasse
Merlin & Mary Grieser
Peter & Frances Grill
Amos Groff
Anna Groff
Marlin & Sue Groff
David Groh
Marjorie Gunden
Opal Gunden
Steven & Deborah Gunden
Barth & Betty Hague
Kathryn Hamsher
Willard & Mary Handrich
Bruce & Kathleen Harder
Martin & Mary Harder
Milton Harder

Finding Hope in Recovery
FAMILIES LIVING WITH ADDICTION

Airing Jan. 4–Feb. 14 on ABC-TV stations
(at their discretion)

Challenging and heartbreaking stories of families facing alcohol and drug addictions. Recovery, reconciliation and healing are possible.

Check local listings for "Vision & Values" series or go to FindingHopeInRecovery.com for station schedule.

To purchase, call: 800-999-3534
or visit Store.MennoMedia.org
(DVD with bonus material: $24.95 | VHS $19.95)

Mennonite Media | Harrisonburg, Virginia | 800-999-3534

Record contributions from readers for The Mennonite *in 2008*

Ruth Harder
Nancy Hardin
Chad & Denise Harshbarger
Dwight & Pearl Hartman
Peter & Marilyn Hartman
Pearl Hartz
Esther Hartzler
Richard & Hazel Hassan
Roger & Donna Haun
Mary Lou Hayes
Melvin Headrick
Rebecca & Todd Helmuth
Dwight Hershberger
Edgar & De Elda Hershberger
Gladys Hershberger
Jim & Ann Hershberger
Lotus & Judith Hershberger
Patricia Hershberger
Truman & Diana Hershberger
Hiram & Mary Jane Hershey
Kenneth & Joanne Hershey
Larry & Evelyn Hershey
Mervin & Reba Hess
Owen & Elna Hess
Dale & Ursula Hess
Mervin & Nora Hess
Wilbert & Selma Hieb
Elda Ruth Hiebert
JohnHiebert
Donna Hildebrand
Harley & Margaret Himes
Robert & Rachael Hochstedler
Orlin & Lores Hochstetler
William & Rosemary Hochstetler
Clyde & Carolyn Hockman
David & Paige Hodo
Elizabeth Hoover
Leon & Carolyn Hoover
Lester Hoover
Lowell & Velorous Hoover
Laurence Horst
Raymond & Ruth Ann Horst
Daniel & Tere Hostetler
David & Sarah Hostetler
Grace Hostetter
Stanley Hostettler
Gordon & Jeanne Houser
Harold Huber
Gerald & Annabelle Hughes
George Hurst
Lawrence & Thelma Hurst
Luke Hurst
Carl & Lorena Hyde
Marjorie Isaak
Elizabeth Jacobs
Melvin & Joann Jantz
Vernon & Dorothy Jantzi
Melvin Janzen
Elizabeth Jeschke
Dewayne & Carolyn Johns
Loren & Rachel Johns
Mary Johnson
Robert & Juanita Johnson
Titus & Rose Jost
Walter & Mary Ann Jost
David & LouAnn Kanagy
Max & Norene Kanagy
Dale Kauffman
Maxine Kauffman
Paul & Bertha Kauffman
Ray & Tina Kauffman
Ruth Kauffman
Joel & Nancy Kauffmann
Bernice Kaufman
Brian Kaufman
Geneva Kaufman
Leroy & Dawn Kaufman
Ruth Kaufmann
Daniel & Priscilla Keeler
Ruth Keeler
Bob & Rhoda Keener
Leo & Martyne Kempel
Wayne & Esther Kempf
Arthur & Lois Kennel
Dale & Faye King
David & Debra King
John & Evelyn King
John & Kelli King
Ruth King
Velma Kingsley
Kinzers Mennonite Church
Loyal & Bertha Klassen
Marie Kleinsasser
John Melvin Klotz
Tom & Catherine Klug
Robert & Linda Koch
Roy & Martha Koch
John & Dorothy Kratz
Donald Kraybill
Elvin & Esther Kraybill
Rudy & Roberta Krehbiel
Alan & Eleanor Kreider
Elvin & Maribeth Kreider
Evelyn Kreider
John & Betty Kreider
Lester Kropf
Cora Kurtz
Stephen Kurtz
Gregory & Ellen Lacher
Warren & Janice Lambright
Anna Mae Landis
Jeffrey Landis
Omar & Sara Lapp
James & Alma Larrew
Ivan & Mary Ellen Leaman
Robert & Nancy Lee
Elwin LeFevre
Celia Lehman
David & Lois Lehman
Dennis & Romaine Lehman
Elton & Phyllis Lehman
Esther Lehman
Freeman & Eileen Lehman
Grace Lehman
John & Margaret Lehman
Mabel Lehman
Marion Lehman
Milton & Lois Lehman
Paul & Mary Alice Lehman
Richard & Colleen Lehman
Willis Lehman
Bruce Leichty
Melvin & Lois Leidig
Glen & Jean Lengacher
Ron & Elaine Lengacher
Norman & Vicki Lichti
Lynn & Doris Liechty
Russel & Marjorie Liechty
Clifford & Hope Lind
Leonard & Shirley Loganbill
Kenneth & Nancy Long
Leonard & Judith Long
Charles & Barbara Longenecker
Daniel & Catherine Longenecker
Elmer Longenecker
Oliver & Patricia Lugibihl
Lester & Leota Mann
Ken & Mary Mannes
Marion Mennonite Church
Laurel Martens
Daryl & Karen Martin
James & Ethel Martin
John & Audry Martin
John & Flora Martin
Mary Alice Martin
Ruth Martin
Sheldon & Naomi Martin
Weaver & Kathryn Martin
Kenneth & Yvonne Martin
Walter Massanari
Jon & Rhoda Mast
LeRoy & Sherry Mast
Moses & Sadie Mast
John & Lucretia Mattson
Elmer Maust
Wilfredo & Marilyn Mayer
Monte & Beth McIntyre
Wilma McKee
Deloris Meiners
Donald & Alta Mellinger
Mennonite Mutual Aid
Mercersburg Mennonite Church
Eugene & Jean Metzler
Everett & Margaret Metzler
Dean & Doris Meyer
Larry & Pat Meyer
Tom & Erika Meyer
Milford Mennonite Church
Arnold & Carol Miller
Clyde & Helen Miller
Edwin & Joann Miller
Edwin & Mary Jane Miller
Jeffrey & Kaylene Miller
Lawrence & Marjora Miller
Leo & Dorothy Miller
Lois Miller
Maxine Miller
Michael & Lois Miller
Richard Miller
Robert & Ellene Miller
William & Phyllis Miller
Ronald & Sally Milne
Donald & Martha Minter
Angel & Lora Miranda
Mary Mishler
Richard & Doris Morgan
John & Mary Moser
Charles & Carolyn Moyer
Harold & Rosemary Moyer
John Moyer
Phillip & Betsy Moyer
David & Joanna Moyer-Diener
Robert & Judi Mullett
Lorraine Murphy
Michael & Denise Murphy
Audrey Musselman
Pauline Musselman
Freida Myers
Andrew & Ruth Nafziger
Calvin Nafziger
Eldon & Laverne Nafziger
Marvin & Edith Nafziger
Roger & Laurie Nafziger
Donald Taft Nair
Stanley & Ruth Naylor
Elmer & Lavera Neufeld
Herb & Lilly Ann Neufeld
Harold & Joanne Neumann

Continues on page 26

In one year, almost $70,000 was given to Mennonite congregations at giving.MennoniteUSA.org.
How much went to your church?

Take your giving online to
giving.MennoniteUSA.org

Mennonite
Church
USA

Record contributions from readers for The Mennonite *in 2008*

Continued from page 25

Roger & Luetta Neumann
Jerry & Barbara Newcomer
Wesley & Betty Newswanger
John Nighswander
Lowell & Miriam Nissley
Wayne & Mary Nitzsche
Miriam Nofsinger
Delmer & Lauretta Nofziger
Myrl & Phyllis Nofziger
Rebecca Nolt
Susan Nolt
Wilmer & Doris Nolt
Marion Nunemaker
Ada Nussbaum
Donald & Faye Nyce
John Oberholtzer
Donald & Mary Oesch
Lila Osborne
Millard & Joyce Osborne
Evan & Eileen Oswald
Paul Oswald
Eli Otto
Mary Oyer
Ann Pasnick
Elam & Nancy Peachey
Laban Peachey
Leroy & Lois Peachey
Charles & Anna Mae Pellman
Richard & Betty Pellman
Gustav Penner
Lauren & Twila Penner
Luella Penner
John & Sara Peters
Anna Marie Peterson
Lena Pettiford
Brian & Lynette Plank
Amy Pollock
David & Karen Powell
Michael & Darlene Powers
Christine Purves
William Todd Rainey
Heber & Cheryl Ramer
Richard & Velma Ratzlaff
Don & Barbara Reber
Harold & Barbara Reed
Stanley & Janet Reedy
Gareth Rees
Clarence & Ruth Reeser
Arnold & Mary Regier
Edwin & Ella Regier
Anne Reichenbach
Richard & Lois Reimer
Daniel & Cleta Reinford
Merle & Ruth Ann Reinford
Loren & Peggy Reusser
James & Mary Rhoade
Richard & Laura Rhodes
Dennis Rice
Elmer & Eunice Richard
Dennis & Shirley Ries
Troy & Donna Risser
Joanne Rivera
Earl Rohrer
Ella Rohrer
John & Betty Rohrer
Earl & Marilyn Rose
Henry & Charlotte Rosenberger
Edward Roth
Herbert & Darlene Roth
Jay & Anne Roth
Jean Roth
Paul & Caroll Roth
Carl & Ruth Rudy
Marlin Rupp
Richard Rush
Paul & Corinna Ruth
Carl & Lovina Rutt
Clarence & Helen Rutt
Glenn & Pauline Rutt
John & Rebecca Rutt
Virginia Ryan
Arlene Saner
Martha Sangree
Delmar Sauder
Ronald & Susan Sauder
Ronald & Leanne Schertz
Daniel & Margaret Schipani
Laverne & Carol Schirch
Elmer Schmidt
Howard & Marilyn Schmidt
Milferd & Marilyn Schmidt
Randolph & Meribeth Schmidt
Vera Schmidt
Homer Schmucker
Bradley & Mindi Schrock
Twila Schrock
Ivan & Marian Schwabbauer
Richard & Susan See
Kathryn Shantz
Virginia Sharp
James & Esther Shaum
Elizabeth Shelly
Maynard & Griselda Shelly
Donald & Jewell Shenk
Jerome & Leila Shenk
Michael & Margaret Shenk
Kirk & Mary Ann Shisler
Donald & Ila Shoemaker
Loren & Vesta Shoemaker
Gerald & Karen Short
Art & Velma Shoup
Brian & Lisa Showalter
Samuel & Janice Showalter
Harold & Alma Mae Shultz
Carl & Dinah Siebert
Marvin & Katherine Siebert
Merle & Florence Siebert
Anthony Siegrist
Silverwood Mennonite Church
Women in Mission
Monroe & Beatrice Slabach
Robert & Margaret Smith
Muriel Smoker
Amos & Velma Smucker

Want to give back?

The Mennonite is accepting donations for the **Prisoners Fund** and the **Overseas Workers Fund.** If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to either or both, send your donation to *The Mennonite,* 1700 S. Main Street, Goshen, IN 46526. Specify to which fund you are contributing. For more information contact Rebecca Helmuth at **800-790-2498.**

Affordable insurance for home, auto, farm, church or small business. Find your local agent at goodville.com or call us at 800-448-4622.

Goodville Mutual
New Holland, Pa.

timely tip:
Inspect your tires for good tread depth!

Record contributions from readers for The Mennonite *in 2008*

George & Barbara Smucker
Mark & Vicki Smucker
Anne Smucker Jantzi
Allene Smucker-Klassen
Ray & Sylvia Snader
Susan Sommer
Elvin Souder
Ruth Souder
Wayne & Joanne Speigle
James & Carol Spicher
Marlin & Alice Sprunger
Wilma Srof
Milo & Viola Stahl
Bruce & Neva Stambaugh
James & Ruth Stauffer
Ray Steider
Edgar Stevanus
Barry & Ingrid Stoltzfus
Daniel & Rosalie Stoltzfus
George & Mae Stoltzfus
Richard & Elaine Stoltzfus
Ruth Stoltzfus
Sara Ellen Stoltzfus
Victor & Marie Stoltzfus
Stoner Heights Mennonite Church
Hulda Stucky
Keith Stucky
Phyllis Suter
Earl & Margaret Sutter
Lela Sutter
Dale & Beulah Swartzendruber
Melvin & Mary Swartzendruber
Ruth Ann Swartzendruber
Thelma Swartzendruber
Warren & Jackie Swartzendruber
Melvin & Gladys Sweigart
Everett & Barbara Thomas
Steve Thomas
Darrell & Mary Ann Thompson
Sarah Thompson
Irene Troyer
Ora & Mary Troyer
Patrick Turner
Dale & Ruth Umble
Ethel Umble
George & Dorothy Unger
Norman & Mary Vercler
Isaac Villegas
Paul Von Gunten
Elmer & Winifred Wall
Harris & Christine Waltner
Vern & Judy Warkentin
Richard & Carolyn Watkins
Barry & Marjorie Weaver
Dale & Deborah Weaver
Doris Weaver
Joseph Weaver
Richard & Margaret Weaver
Robert & Anna Mae Weaver
Robert & Jean Weaver
Sara Weaver
Elvin & Ruth Weber
Russell & Ellen Welty
Anna Grace Wenger
Chester & Sara Jane Wenger
Lowell & Marlene Wenger
Martin & Diane Wenger
Robert & Lena Wenger
Joe & Phyllis Wengerd
Robert & Esther Wert
David & Almeda Whitton
Louise Wideman
Glen & Helen Widmer
JG & Helen Widmer
Margot Wiebe
Gordon & LeAnna Wiens
Linda Wiens
Clifford & Dianne Witmer
Thelma Wolgemuth
Dale & Geneva Wyse
Eldon & Pauline Wyse
John & Norma Wyse
John & Deborah Yeakel
Allen & Marie Yoder
Annabelle Yoder
Arlan & Ila Yoder
Byard & Judy Yoder
Carroll & Nancy Yoder
Darvin & Martha Yoder
Delvon & Shirley Yoder
Earl & Peggy Yoder
Ed & Theo Yoder
Esther Yoder
Everett Yoder
Helen Yoder
John & Esther Yoder
Leo Yoder
LeRoy & Martha Yoder
Marcus & Vonna Yoder
Marvin & Neta Faye Yoder
Nelson & Patricia Yoder
Norman & Linda Yoder
Paul & Anita Yoder
Ray & Jane Yoder
Robert & Dorothy Yoder
Ronald & Shirley Yoder
Russel & Charlene Yoder
Wayne & Belinda Yoder
Paul & Daisy Yoder
Daryl & Marlisa Yoder-Bontrager
Alan Yordy
Lloyd Zeager
John & Betty Zehr
Marvin & Florence Zehr
Wesley & Carolyn Zehr
Joe & Beverly Zerger
Richard & Betty Zimmerman
John & Jeanne Zook
Wilmer & Margaret Zook

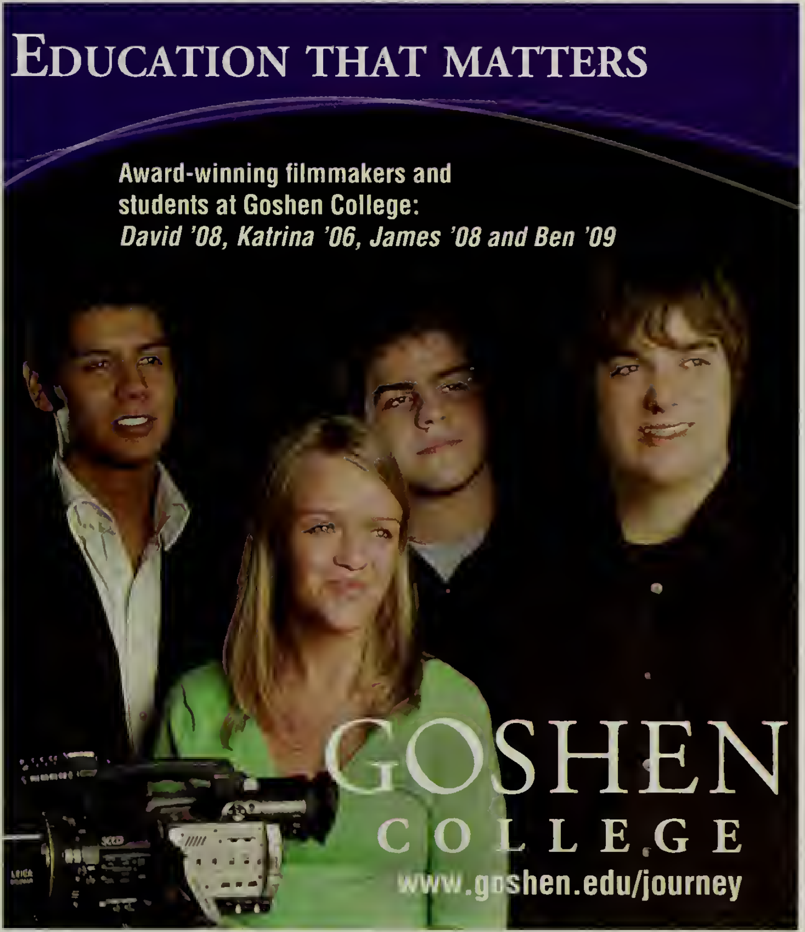
New from Cascadia, copublished Herald Press

118 Days: Christian Peacemaker Teams Held Hostage in Iraq, ed. Tricia Gates Brown. In 2005, Christian Peacemaker Teams members were kidnapped in Iraq. Tom Fox was killed. "They are an example for Christians everywhere." —*Archbishop Desmond Tutu*. 264 p; $17.95 (copublished CPT but not HP)

Loving Enemies: A Manual for Ordinary People, Randy and Joyce Klassen, who tell how worn-out war-making scripts can be replaced by what foreword writer *Robert K. Johnston* terms "the illogical word of God's grace." 148 p; $13.95

The Coat Is Thin, poems by Leonard Neufeldt, which "make me weep for the woman I once was among the fir and cottonwoods, the stars west of Williams Lake, my immigrant kin. Read them and prepare to be 'seized by joy.'" —*Patricia Henley*. 100 p; $12.95

Cascadia
www.CascadiaPublishingHouse.com
contact@cascadiapublishinghouse.com
Herald Press: 1-800-245-7894


EDUCATION THAT MATTERS
Award-winning filmmakers and students at Goshen College:
David '08, Katrina '06, James '08 and Ben '09
GOSHEN
COLLEGE
www.goshen.edu/journey

"For the Record" is available to members of Mennonite Church USA. To submit information, log on to www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our online forms. You can also submit information by email, fax or mail:

- •Editor@TheMennonite.org
- •fax 574-535-6050
- •1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794

WORKERS

Burdette, Rob, began a term as transitional pastor at Hively Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., on Oct. 22.

Gascho-Cooke, Susan, was ordained as chaplain at Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, Atlanta, Ga., on Nov. 2.

Hartzler, Rachel Nafziger, was ordained as pastor at Pleasant Oaks Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind., on Nov. 23.

Miller, Daniel Z., ended a term as transitional pastor at Clinton Brick Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Nov. 16.

North, Emily, was ordained as pastor at Shalom Mennonite Congregation, Harrisonburg, Va., on Nov. 16.

Rhodes, Heidi Siemens, was licensed as co-pastor at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Nov. 30.

Schlegel, Sarah, was ordained as pastor at Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo, Ind., on Nov. 16.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Chappell-Lakin, Quinn Emerson, Oct. 31, to Mark and Katie Chappell-Lakin, Marietta, Ga.

Gerber, Connor Samuel, Nov. 27, to Shawn and Rachel Springer Gerber, Goshen, Ind.

Good, Alexa Lea, Nov. 16, to Neal and Jessica Rumer Good, Lima, Ohio.

Jaberg, Kiara Jane, born Oct. 28 in South Bend, Ind., received for adoption on Nov. 3 by Kevin and Tonya Miller Jaberg, Goshen, Ind.

Knight-King, Ginger Elizabeth, Nov. 19, to Zachary and Kelsey Knight-King, Portland, Ore.

Leaman, Ryan Elizabeth, Nov. 27, to Patrick and Kris Marchalonis Leaman, Sinking Spring, Pa.

Lemley, Elliot John, Oct. 28, to Todd and Kristen Simpson Lemley, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Nafziger, Gage Daniel, Nov. 13, to Lincoln and Jen Varner Nafziger, Wauseon, Ohio.

Neufeld, Sawyer Daniel, Nov. 21, to Anthony John and Sara Johnson Neufeld, Fayetteville, Ark.

Reichenbach, Niles Josiah, July 13, to Neil and Renea Roth Reichenbach, Wayland, Ind.

Rinner, Emily Marie, March 5, to Tye and Diane Stille Rinner, Wayland, Iowa.

Rinner, Malachi Swift, July 2, to Troy and Rachael Graber Rinner, Wayland, Ind.

Rissler, Peter Winifred, Nov. 14, James and Christina Burnham Rissler, Atlanta, Ga.

Stamm, Garrett Edward, Nov. 4, to Jared and Emily Lange Stamm, Archbold, Ohio.

Wagner, Sydney Ruth, Sept. 26, to Eric and Kimberly Huston Wagner, Paoli, Pa.

Wyse, Callie Lynn, Nov. 18, to Neil and Jamie King Wyse, Wauseon, Ohio.

MARRIAGES

Eschmann/Nance: Erich Eschmann, Washington, D.C., and Jessie Nance, Washington, D.C., Oct. 11, at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

Pacha/Rinner: Edward Pacha, Brighton, Iowa, and Alicia Rinner, Wayland, Iowa, Aug. 2, at Wayland Mennonite Church.

Steadman/Thomas: Michael Steadman, Wayne, Pa., and Rachel Thomas, Oaks, Pa., Nov. 8, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Phoenixville, Pa.

DEATHS

Goshow, Ruth Moyer, 87, Souderton, Pa., died Nov. 20. Spouse: Ezra M. Goshow. Parents: David D. and Mary Lizzie Allebach Moyer. Children: John, Ronald, Ruthanne Goshow, Mary Jane Yoder, Linda Derstine, Laurel Moyer; 16 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 25 at Franconia Mennonite Church, Franconia, Pa.

Marner, Eunice Lenore Reber, 93, Wellman, Iowa, died Nov. 2. Spouse: Ora Marner. Parents: George and Sarah Kreider Reber. Children: James, Loris Miller; eight grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; six great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 6 at Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa.

McDermott, Patrick Michael, 64, Lansdale, Pa., died Nov. 16 of cancer. Spouse: Barbara Schttig McDermott. Parents: James Francis and Margaret Ketrick McDermott. Children: Michael A., Deirdre M. Smith, Tricia Gibney, Kyle; two grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 22 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale.

Schmidt, Wilhelm G., 92, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 7. Spouse: Vera Nafziger Williams Schmidt. Parents: Wilhelm and Adele Schmidt. Children: Rosa Sommers, Gretchen Ursisi; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 12 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Smucker, Daniel Martin, 91, Harrisonburg, Va., died Nov. 19. Spouse: Frances Yoder Smucker (deceased). Parents: Dan and Verna Mast Smucker. Children: Gary, Jean Smucker Fisher, Karen Smucker Shelly, Elwood, Helen Jo Smucker; three grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; two step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 22 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Stahly, H. LaMar, 90, Nappanee, Ind., died Oct. 24. Spouse: Pauline Lois Weldy Stahly. Parents: Harvey and Nellie McGowan Stahly. Children: Terry, Dennis, Bruce, Steve, Kirby; 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 28 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind.

Stamm, Walter E., 88, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 21. Spouse: Martha Jane Eicher Stamm (deceased). Parents: Fred and Hulda Aeschliman Stamm. Children: Edward, Roger, Dale, Pat Bondi, Karen Wyse; 19 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 25 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Weaver, Paul Alvin, 33, Millersburg, Ohio, died Nov. 25. Parents: Robert C. and Kathy Miller Weaver. Siblings: Nathaniel, Matthew, Robert C. "Robbie" II. Funeral: Nov. 29 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church, Walnut Creek, Ohio.

We came for the Values, and the Value.

MENNO HAVEN
Relationships. Values. Options.
MENNO VILLAGE • NORTHFIELD • PENN HALL
800.222.6695 www.mennohaven.org
Menno Haven is committed to providing equal housing for all.

Western Mennonite School seeks a ***director of advancement*** to lead the advancement team and support the future growth of Western's mission. Responsibilities include: building community relationships, directing annual and long-range planning, directing and implementing fund-raising efforts and promoting Christ-centered education from a Mennonite faith perspective. Western offers Christ-centered education for grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres outside Salem in the Willamette Valley of the Pacific Northwest. Position will remain open until filled. Contact Darrel Camp, 866-343-9378 or dcamp@westernmennoniteschool.org.

Mountville Mennonite Church (Lancaster Mennonite Conference) is seeking ***full-time associate pastor for youth ministry*** with training or experience in youth ministry and discipleship, commitment to Anabaptist core values and passion for reaching unchurched youth. Starting summer 2009. Applications requested by March 1. Contact: Jim Herr jcjbc5@aol.com; 717-285-2153.

Hesston College seeks applicants for a ***head women's softball coach***. As a part of the athletic department, the person in this part-time position will be responsible for all aspects of the softball program, including recruiting, scheduling, managing a budget, travel arrangements, etc. Qualifications include experience and knowledge of fastpitch softball, the ability to teach the skills and strategy of the game to college student-athletes, recruiting skills, love for students and commitment to Mennonite higher education. This position will be open with duties commencing February 2009 and continuing into the 2009-10 school year and beyond. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until the position is filled. To apply, send resumé, application and faith statement as found at www.hesston.edu/employment to Art Mullet, Athletic Director, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. EOE

Trissels Mennonite Church (www.trisselsmc.org) in Broadway, Va., is currently accepting applications for a ***full-time lead pastor***. Qualifications include a commitment to the theology and practices of Mennonite Church USA, seminary training and experience in the pastorate. Candidate must have a passionate sense of calling to the ministry. A strong emphasis in youth ministry is desirable. Interested people may submit their resumé to trisselsmc@juno.com by Dec. 31, 2008.

Director of Denominational Ministry for **Mennonite Church USA**: Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership is inviting candidates or suggested candidates for the director of Denominational Ministry for Mennonite Church USA. The director will give overall leadership to denominational support for area conference ministers and provide missional church inspiration for all parts of the church. The director will lead the current team of denominational ministers while giving leadership to a process of discernment with area conferences and churchwide agencies for how Executive Leadership and churchwide agencies can better equip conference ministers in the future. For additional information see the employment opportunities listed in the "About us" section at www.MennoniteUSA.org. Application review will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. Executive Leadership is an equal opportunity employer and encourages women and racial/ethnic people to apply. Mail your application to: Executive Leadership, Attn: Human Resources, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; Toll-free: 866-866-2872; email: HR@MennoniteUSA.org.

Landis Homes, a ministry serving aging adults, is seeking a ***director of gift planning***. Responsibilities of this full-time position include planning and implementing fund-raising activities, including annual appeals, planned giving, capital campaigns and special events. Prefer candidate with at least two years experience in fund-raising, a bachelor's degree, effective communication skills, ability to lead a team and an understanding of and appreciation for the Mennonite faith. Send resumé to: Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 East Oregon Road, Lititz, PA 17543; fax: 717-581-3899 or email: aheinly@landishomes.org. Learn more about Landis Homes at www.landishomes.org.

partnership home program

Bring one more family home

Your church can build a home for a family affected by disaster

Mennonite Disaster Service works with local community groups in disaster locations to connect your church with a family that needs a home. ···▸ Your church raises funds, provides materials, organizes volunteers and builds the house. ···▸ One more family goes home.

Mennonite Disaster Service

Find out more about the MDS partnership home program
www.mds.mennonite.net
Canada 866-261-1274 U.S. 717-859-2210

Profits vs. truthtelling

Gordon Houser

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

Two recent viewings have reinforced for me a growing problem in our mediaculture that has dire repercussions. Though I've touched on this before in this column (e.g., Feb. 18, 2003, and April 19, 2005), it bears further reflection.

Earlier this fall, I watched the fifth and final season of "The Wire" on DVD. Many consider this HBO show one of the best shows ever on TV. I concur, though its gritty realism and language in depicting life on the streets and among the political and judicial powers of Baltimore may offend many viewers.

The final season focused on the city's newspaper, *The Baltimore Sun*, and revealed a trend that is occurring across the United States: the downsizing of newspaper staff, particularly reporters, in order to satisfy the wishes of corporate owners, whose main concern is profits for shareholders, not truthtelling.

Corporate ownership of U.S. newspapers has intensified to the point that nearly all are owned by a handful of corporations. (According to the Media Reform Information Center, for example, the number of corporations that control a majority of U.S. media went from 50 in 1983 to six in 2004.) Thus, in "The Wire," the *Sun* is owned by the Tribune company, which shows little concern about investigating crimes in Baltimore unless the coverage somehow brings in money.

Certainly media must make money in order to function, but when concern for profits outweighs concern for learning the truth about what is happening in our communities, we all suffer. Investigative journalism requires allocating resources, sometimes months of reporters' time in order to gain enough information to write truthfully about an issue.

Now to the second viewing. I rewatched *All the President's Men* on DVD in November. This powerful film from 1976 tells the true story of *Washington Post* reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward uncovering the details of the Watergate scandal that led to the resignation of President Nixon in 1974.

Among the special features on the DVD are commentaries by various people, several of whom point out that such a story could not be written in today's media climate. Among other things, newspapers don't have the resources to commit to such a story unless there's a clear sign it will reveal a major revelation, which this one initially did not.

Also, government officials have learned ways to avoid truthtelling and repel reporters' inquiries. One necessary element to such reporting is the use of anonymous sources, which government officials have tried to curtail if not eliminate outright.

Another aspect to our mediaculture that reduces the chances of learning the truth about what is happening behind events is the political polarization that infects much of our society's conversation. People tend to gravitate toward media outlets that reflect their own point of view, and many media outlets are eschewing a more objective analysis of events and reporting of facts in the interest of promulgating a certain viewpoint.

This seems to be especially true for Internet users, which is becoming the majority of readers. Such users often look for opinions that reflect their own viewpoint rather than searching for sources that report actual news.

Such reporting exists, but its ability to investigate issues is being strangled by this culture of polarized opinions and the appetite for continual entertainment. In our rush to consume, we seem to have lost our desire to pursue truth.

Christians especially should be interested in pursuing truthtelling, which is at the heart of our faith. "The truth," Jesus said, "will make you free" (John 8:32). TM

FILMS

Rachel Getting Married (R) brings together a dysfunctional family over a weekend to celebrate the wedding of Rachel, the good sister. The film focuses on the problems of Kym, the black sheep, who gets a weekend pass from a nearby rehab center, and the powerful story that lies behind the family's conflicts. Debra Winger shines in the role of the sisters' mother and brings the conflict to a head in a stunning scene.—*gh*

Happy-Go-Lucky (R for language) is a cheerful, colorful British romantic comedy about Poppy, a single, 30-year-old schoolteacher whose sincere happiness touches everyone around her—whether they ask for it or not. But when Poppy, well-acted by Sally Hawkins, is confronted with an angry person who misreads her intentions, she must make a decision. The dialogue is fresh and believable. It's hard not to smile throughout.—*Anna Groff*

BOOKS

States of Exile: Visions of Diaspora, Witness and Return by Alain Epp Weaver (Herald Press, 2008, $18.99) asks if return for one people must result in the exile of another. In academic language that unfortunately makes the book less accessible, Weaver develops a theology of exile that is "shaped by 'not being in charge' [and] nurtured by the practice of being receptive to provocations from God's word from outside its orbit." This important book has implications beyond Palestine-Israel.

The Purple Crown: The Politics of Martyrdom by Tripp York (Herald Press, 2008, $18.99) covers some of the same themes while arguing that the church's ultimate act of witnessing, martyrdom, is a political act. York looks at the history and meaning of martyrdom. Two of many insights in the book are that martyrdom requires training and that the nation-state tries to take over the salvific role of the church. The church, he writes, "must practice her own politics rather than adopt the politics of those that surround her."

Those of us who bring you The Mennonite wish you God's richest blessings during this season of hope and light.

Left to right: Anna Marie Groff (assistant editor), Celina Romero (bookkeeper), Gordon Houser (associate editor), Rebecca Helmuth (circulation and advertising coordinator), Everett Thomas (editor), Dee Birkey (designer). Not pictured: Nora Miller (proofreader) and Martha Graber (reads *The Mennonite* on audio cassettes).

*********************************CAR-RT LOT**C023
62021 896 15-DEC-09 66994 P-1 P79
ASSOC MENN BIBLICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
3003 BENHAM AVE
ELKHART IN 46517-1947

Everett J. Thomas

A church in recession

This article is available as a podcast at www.TheMennonite.org

For Mennonite Church USA, the year 2008 has had parallels with the developments within the United States. As our editorial staff reviewed the top news stories for the year (see page 20), we discovered some striking similarities:

- We now know that the U.S. economy formally entered a recession in December 2007. About the same time we were learning through the work of Conrad Kanagy that Mennonite Church USA was in a period of contraction.
- Through a wearisome election season, U.S. voters opted for a change in leadership in Washington. In the middle of the primary elections, Mennonite Church USA's Executive Board signaled it also wanted major changes for the structure of our denomination.
- With President-Elect Obama selecting elected officials for his cabinet and staff, there are two high-profile positions open in the Senate, one seat in the House of Representatives and the governorship of Arizona. In the last three months we have also learned of four high-profile positions to be filled within Mennonite Church USA in 2009.

A church in recession: In February 2007, we introduced the church to the findings from a 2006 survey of Mennonite Church USA members. It took about a year for those findings to wend their way into the concerns and actions of leaders across the church. We noticed increasing attention to those findings in 2008.

Just as the downturn in the economy causes us to rethink our priorities, so does the downturn in people's commitment to Mennonite Church USA.

Released as the book *Road Signs for the Journey* (Herald Press, 2007), the "signs" point toward an aging membership, increasing cultural assimilation, increasing political identification and declining church attendance. The good news: Membership in growing racial/ethnic congregations is younger than in white congregations. Nevertheless, Mennonite Church USA is in a kind of recession similar to our country's.

The next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated Jan. 6, 2009.

Calling for change: In March, the Executive Board stunned most leaders in churchwide agencies and their boards of directors by announcing that our denomination's vision and call "is not adequately supported by our present relationships, behaviors and organization." This assessment was followed by a proposal to do away with the Executive Board itself and the boards of directors for Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Education Agency, MMA and Mennonite Publishing Network. In its place would be a new "Leadership Board" responsible for the programs and staff of all Mennonite Church USA agencies.

Although the Executive Board deferred the plan after a June meeting, the signal was unmistakable: Our current course as a denomination is untenable; radical changes are required to get where we want to go.

Positions open: Four high-profile positions within Mennonite Church USA structures will be filled in the next year. We learned of these openings in this order: J. Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., will leave his post next summer. Jim Schrag, executive director for Mennonite Church USA will retire in November 2009. Ron Byler, associate executive director for Mennonite Church USA will leave that position some time in late 2009. The next moderator-elect (who will follow current moderator-elect Ed Diller) will be selected next summer by the Delegate Assembly in Columbus, Ohio.

Just as the downturn in the economy causes us to rethink our priorities, so does the downturn in people's commitment to Mennonite Church USA. Both presidential candidates called for change. The Executive Board also determined that many people in our church want change. We are called in both cases to reflect on our basic commitments and how best to serve God with our resources.

As we wind down an eventful—perhaps watershed—year, uncertainties remind us that our real security is in the providence of God. For a people that assumes too often that we are in control of our own destiny, this reorientation becomes the soil in which seeds of change are planted.—*ejt with Gordon Houser and Anna Groff*

PRINTED WITH SOY INK